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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes results obtained for the first cohort of students (n=98) with disabilities involved in the pilot Transition Project begun in 1989 in New South Wales (Australia). Students were in either special schools (56 percent), special classes in regular high schools (40 percent), or integrated regular settings (3.5 percent). Of the students, 87 percent had intellectual disabilities, 9 percent physical disabilities, 3 percent multiple disabilities, and 1 percent sensory disabilities. Interviews were held 1 to 2 years after leaving school with 57 of the students, of whom two-thirds were male. High school education had focused on functional curriculum areas stressing community-based instruction, with 84 percent of interviewed students having been involved in vocational training. This training occupied from 40 to 80 percent of instruction time during the students' last year in school. Half the sample was employed at the time of follow up. Fifteen (26 percent) were at home without occupation or further education and training prospects. Severity of disability, especially intellectual, was associated with likelihood of being employed in full-time competitive employment. Students (61 percent) who had been assisted in transition to either postsecondary education or employment had better overall outcomes. Poorest outcomes were for youth who aged out or dropped out. Recommendations stress the special needs of youth with high support needs. (Contains 92 references.) (DB)

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UNIT FOR REHABILITATION STUDIES
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

Secondary Education: A Follow-Along Study of Students with Disabilities in Transition in New South Wales

EC 302190

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A Research and Development Report
for the Department of School Education
funded by the Special Education Directorate

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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

Secondary Education: A Follow-Along Study of Students with Disabilities in Transition in New South Wales

A Research and Development Report
for the Department of School Education
funded by the Special Education Directorate

Vivienne Riches, Trevor Parmenter, Margaret Fegent and Phillip Bailey

February, 1993

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Macquarie University 2109

4

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY vii

OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES 1

- Follow up and Follow along Studies 2
- Previous Research Findings 4
- Employment Status 4
- Factors Affecting Employment Outcomes 7
  - a) Level of Disability 7
  - b) Gender 7
  - c) Manner of Exiting High School 8
  - d) Vocational Education/ Work Experience 9
  - e) Manner of Finding Employment 10
  - f) Location 11
- Further Training Needs 11
- Post Compulsory Education 11
- Residential and Social Adjustment 12
- Quality of Life 12
- The NSW Transition Project 15

METHOD 17

- Instrumentation 17
- Procedures 18
- Survey Response Rate 19
- Information Source for Follow Up 20

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES 21

- Disability Type 21
- Geographic Region 22
- Gender 23
- Age at Leaving School and Time Out of School 23
- Ethnicity 24
- Type of School Placement 24
- Manner of Leaving School 25

SECONDARY SCHOOL PROGRAMS 30

- Regular Academic Subjects 31
- Functional Academics 31
- Vocational Curriculum 32
- Community Living Curriculum 32

  Recreation and Leisure 32
  Personal Management 32
  Transport 32
  Curriculum Patterns for Disability Groups 32
  Inter agency Planning 35
  Vocational Training Initiatives 35
  Amount of Community Based Instruction 36

FOLLOW UP RESULTS OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES SURVEYED 37
  Living arrangements 37
  Living Expenses 37
  Recreation, Leisure and Social Support 38
  Transport 40
  Type of Post School Assistance Desired 41
  Voting 42
  Income Support 43
  Employment Patterns 43
  Employment Rate At Time of Survey 44
  Length of Time Employed 49
  Method of Finding the Job 50
  Activity Patterns Among Those Not Employed 51
  Post Compulsory Education and Training 52
  Activities Post School 55
  TAFE Courses during Transition and Post School Experiences 55

DISCUSSION 57
  Curriculum Issues 58
  Employment Patterns 59
  Factors Affecting Outcomes 60
    Disability 60
    Occupationally Oriented Vocational Training 62
    Manner of leaving school 62
  Post compulsory education and training 63
  Youth with High Support Needs 63
  Independent Living 64

CONCLUSION 65

RECOMMENDATIONS 66

REFERENCES 68

APPENDICES

Form A: Telephone Interview Format
Form B : Student Information Form

TABLES

Table 1: Interview response rates 19
Table 2 : Source of information for the survey according to disability group 20
Table 3: Disabilities of former students in transition population and sample 21
Table 4: Numbers of students by Department of School Education Region 22
Table 5: Length of time since leaving school for population and sample 23
Table 6: Ethnicity of population and sample 24
Table 7: Level of former school placement for total group and sample 25
Table 8: Manner of leaving school 26
Table 9: School curriculum areas covered in last year of school 31
Table 10: Number of former students involved in vocational training transition initiatives 35
Table 11: Living arrangements of former students 37
Table 12: Portion of living expenses paid by former students 37
Table 13: Types of activities engaged in by disability groups (N=57) 39
Table 14: Free time 40
Table 15: Method of transport 40
Table 16: Type of service assistance desired by disability type 42
Table 17: Number registered to vote 42
Table 18: Number of youth in receipt of social security support 43
Table 19: Number of different paid jobs since leaving high school by disability 44
Table 20: Employment type by disability 45
Table 21: Job titles 47
Table 22: Number of hours worked per week 48
Table 23: Income levels gained by youth with disabilities in employment (N=29) 48
Table 24: Increases and promotions experienced at work 49
Table 25: Length of time working in current job by disability (N=29) 50
Table 26: Method of finding job (N=29) 50
Table 27: Activity while not employed by disability type (N=28) 51
Table 28: Numbers Gaining Assistance in Seeking Employment (N=28) 52
Table 29: Numbers considered enrolling in post compulsory education and training 52

Table 30: Participation rates in post compulsory education and training for survey sample 53
Table 31: Types of post compulsory courses selected 54
Table 32: Assistance with post compulsory education and training 54
Table 33: Outcomes for those participating in vocational training service initiatives (N=45) 56

FIGURES

Figure 1: Information source for follow up/along 20
Figure 2: Type and level of disability of youth in the pilot transition population and the sample interviewed 22
Figure 3: Genger of youth with disabilities interviewed 23
Figure 4: Level of school placement for sample interviewed 25
Figure 5: Frequencies for total group and sample interviewed by 27
Figure 6a: Manner of leaving school for those with mild intellectual disabilities (N=21) 27
Figure 6b: Manner of leaving school for those with moderate intellectual disabilities (N=19) 28
Figure 6c: Manner of leaving school for those with severe intellectual disabilities (N=8) 28
Figure 6d: Manner of leaving school for those with physical disabilities (N=6) 29
Figure 6e: Manner of leaving school for those with multiple disabilities (N=3) 29
Figure 7a: Curriculum areas studied by youth with mild intellectual disabilities (N=21) 33
Figure 7b: Curriculum areas studied by youth with moderate intellectual disabilities (N=19) 33
Figure 7c: Curriculum areas studied by youth with severe intellectual disabilities (N=8) 34
Figure 7d: Curriculum areas studied by youth with physical disabilities (N=6) 34
Figure 7e: Curriculum areas studied by youth with multiple disabilities (N=3) 34
Figure 8: Numbers of former students involved in community based or school based instruction for population and sample interviewed 36
Figure 9: Percentage of sample participating in various social and recreational activities over the past month 38

Figure 10: Percentage of youth with disabilities requiring various types of assistance post school 41
Figure 11: Number of youth with disabilities by number of jobs post school 43
Figure 12: Employment type gained by youth with disabilities 45
Figure 13: Employment status of youth surveyed by disability 46
Figure 14: Employment status by manner of leaving school 46
Figure 15: Percentage of sample by time employed in current job 49
Figure 16: Post compulsory education and training rates for youth with disabilities 53
Figure 17: Activities of youth with disabilities post school 55

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tracking or follow along studies are essential to monitor the effectiveness of the programs being implemented in schools and to provide information on outcome measures that can guide both program and policy development. One critical period in which such outcome measures are required concerns the transition from school to adulthood. This transition phase has been identified as particularly crucial for students with disabilities, since these youths have generally been acknowledged to experience poorer post school outcomes than their nondisabled peers.

A system of tracking students with disabilities through this transition period was initiated in NSW in 1991, as a vital part of the Transition Project being trialed in the state. This report summarises the results obtained for the first cohort of students with disabilities who were involved in the project in 1989 and 1990.

Biographical information (disability, age, gender etc) and data on type of school placement, curriculum and instruction received in the final school years and manner of leaving school were obtained from school records. Data concerning current activities and experiences since leaving school were obtained from telephone interviews with the former students and/or family members.

The results gained concerning the transition, post school experiences and outcomes for this first group of students form the basis of what is hoped will become an increasingly comprehensive set of data over the next few years. It is anticipated that these data will assist policy makers and practitioners to be more proactive in planning, implementing and refining systems and transition processes and so enhance positive educational outcomes, post school adjustment and quality of life for young people with disabilities.

The introduction of the pilot transition project in four initial sites involved a total of ninety eight students who were in special schools (56%) or special classes in regular high schools (40%). Only a small proportion (3.5%) of those involved were in integrated regular secondary education settings, as the systems for assisting these students were not in place. The majority of students had an intellectual disability (mild 48%; moderate 30%; severe 9%). A small number of students had physical disabilities (9%), multiple disabilities (3%) or sensory (1%).

Of the total group of ninety eight, only fifty seven former special education students (58%) were able to be contacted and interviewed. The majority of those who could not be contacted were youths with mild or moderate intellectual disabilities. Many of these had moved house and left no forwarding address. A number had moved interstate. Three youths were deceased and two youths refused to be interviewed. Consequently the sample interviewed had a higher percentage of youths with high support needs than the original population.

Of those interviewed, eighty four percent had an intellectual disability (37% mild, 33% moderate and 14% severe intellectual disability), eleven per cent were youths with physical disabilities, and five per cent had multiple disabilities (intellectual and physical).

Students were aged between fifteen and nineteen years at the time of leaving school. They had been out of school for one to two years at the time of interview and so were aged between sixteen and twenty one years at follow up. Approximately two thirds were male, and one third female. Several youths were from Aboriginal and non English speaking backgrounds.

Data on the type and amount of instruction received in various curriculum areas were examined. Curriculum and instruction choices had, in the main, been made within the individual transition planning process. These choices therefore reflected the needs, preferences and interests of the students, as agreed to by the individual planning teams.

Only nine per cent of the students surveyed had followed a traditional academic curriculum. This was primarily because, as indicated, few mainstream students participated in the pilot stage, as structures had not yet been developed to support them, while those in special secondary educational settings had chosen alternative directions. Functional curriculum areas with an emphasis upon community based instruction predominated among the group sampled. Curriculum areas included vocational training (84%), recreation and leisure (67%), community living skills (65%), functional academics (63%), personal management (61%), and travel training (30%).

The heavy emphasis was clearly evident in the vocational training area. Eighty four per cent of students had been involved in vocational training of some sort, with training time occupying between forty to eighty percent of instruction time in the students' last year of school. This finding highlights the importance still placed on employment by youth with disabilities and their families, in spite of record youth unemployment figures and the structural changes occurring in the employment sector.

The type of vocational training was typically occupationally oriented and skill based, as distinct from career awareness courses. Many students participated in specialised TAFE courses run through the Transition Project (60%), eighteen per cent had received 1:1 instruction on the job, through job coaching services and several had also been involved in community based work experience programs.

Approximately half the sample (51%) was found to be employed at the time of survey and two youths (4%) were involved in full time vocational training. One youth was involved in a day program, two were undertaking voluntary work, and eight (14%) were actively seeking work. Fifteen individuals (26%) were at home without occupation or further education and training prospects.

Disability type and manner of leaving school were both significant variables affecting post school outcomes. Youths with mild intellectual disabilities were more likely than any other group to be in full time, award wage employment, or to be actively seeking work. Seventy one percent of this group had held at least one award wage job since leaving school, although only nine (43%) were employed at the time of survey. Employment placements varied but were typically in the low skill and low income group. Claims that this group become part of the marginal work force, subject to seasonal variations and economic changes may be correct, as the number unemployed at the time of survey may have been affected by the December - January holiday closures for a number of industries.

All youths with moderate intellectual disabilities were involved in some form of employment (95%) or day activity (5%). However at least half of this employment was in sheltered settings or supported employment where wages were low. Most were in receipt of social security support.

Only one youth with a physical disability was employed, and that was in a sheltered setting. Two were involved in voluntary or other work. Despite the fact that these youths had gained school certificates, none of this group was involved in any post secondary education or training.

Youth with severe and multiple disabilities were generally at home, without any gainful employment or day activity. Only one youth with a severe intellectual disability was employed. All were in receipt of financial support.

Manner of leaving school was found to significantly affect post school outcomes, but was also related to type and level of disability. A large number of former students (61%) had been assisted to transition from school to another placement post school, either some form of employment or post secondary training. Overall these students had better post school outcomes in terms of employment and participation rates in post secondary education and training than any other group. Most of these students had a mild or moderate intellectual disability. Contrary to other studies in which the self /family /friend network was most important, a significant role was played by school and, to a lesser extent, community personnel in these placements. This appears to have been an effect of the transition planning process.

The relevance of manner of leaving school is consistent with other research (Wagner, 1992) that found manner of leaving school to be a significant variable affecting post school outcomes. However some differences were noted. In the USA, best performances related to graduation and poorest outcomes related to aging out and dropping out.

Certainly poorest outcomes were evident among those who aged out or dropped out. A number of youths surveyed (23%) for example, who came from special schools, had met the legal age limit and "aged out". These youths were generally those with high support needs, who had nowhere to transition to post school, since extremely limited services exist for this group. These former students are now homebound with no employment or day activity.

Unlike the American results however, the small number of students who had graduated with formal accreditation (3·5%), were not found to be employed or involved in any post compulsory education or training. Each of these youths had a physical disability. This finding was disturbing but may be an artefact of the small sample size. Further investigation of the outcomes for students with physical disabilities is definitely warranted .

The involvement of students with mild and moderate intellectual disabilities in occupationally oriented vocational courses was found to be significant in contributing to higher employment and post compulsory education and training rates. Students who had been involved in TAFE courses and/or job coaching during their final year at school were more likely to be employed. Participation in post secondary education and training only comprised those former students who had participated in a TAFE course during the final school years. Interaction effects were apparent between involvement in occupationally oriented vocational training, disability and manner of leaving school, such that further investigation and analysis of this trend is advisable.

All youth with disabilities were living either at home with family or in group homes at the time of survey, and family and friend networks appeared vital. This finding is similar to other follow up/follow along studies, in which young people with disabilities appear to remain at home far longer than their nondisabled peers.

Some quality of life issues were investigated but more data on social networks and supports are required. Recreation and leisure activities proved varied and some differences were noted according to disability type and level. Irrespective of disability type, the majority of youth surveyed (77%) requested extra assistance and support in the recreation and leisure area. This was particularly striking, both for the number of youth requesting such assistance, and because it was the only area on which all disability groups were unanimous. It highlights the importance of recreation and leisure in our society post school, and the needs of all people with disabilities in this area.

School based programs are obviously insufficient for the need, and links to generic and specialised post school leisure services are required. The establishment of community based links and liaison with post school recreation and leisure programs that focus on developing natural supports in the community is recommended.

The plight of youth with high support needs is concerning. These youth were not employed, nor engaged in further education and training or daily activity of any kind. Like their less disabled peers, they desired more recreation and leisure activities and required assistance in extending their leisure and recreation options. There do not appear to be any post school options, either in urban or rural areas, to which these young people can make a transition. The community has called for an Independent Living Training service model, but few are in operation. Those few that are operating cater for a very small numbers of individuals. Several Community Transition Teams have gathered additional data and developed submissions for post school services in their areas. To date these have been met with little success. This leaves the majority of youth and adults with high support needs no option but to remain at home post school.

As a result of the analyses of the data collected , several recommendations are made. These recommendations are that:

1. A refined tracking system that includes more quality of life data be implemented on a regular basis to evaluate the effectiveness of the transition process and its outcomes for students with disabilities, and this data be accessible to regions, schools and communities for planning purposes.

2. The transition processes, post school adjustment and quality of life of students with sensory and physical disabilities be examined as a matter of urgency.

3. That the individual planning system continue as the driving mechanism in the transition process for all students with disabilities in transition. Any school wishing to improve students' transition from school to post school adjustment should introduce the individual planning system.

4. That staff in schools providing transition services to students with disabilities be adequately trained in the transition process. This training should include familiarisation with and understanding of the transition policy, procedures and guidelines (including the individual planning process) and the development of skills to implement the process competently for the specific disability group involved.

5. Occupationally oriented transition services such as TAFE courses and job coaching be available to students with disabilities in their final school years, and provided on a priority basis according to set criteria eg.
    - the student has an ITP developed by a team including the student

- the application has sufficient information from the school identifying the course as an area of student interest, and
- there is sufficient school assessment information re strengths and training needs

6. The current fee for service arrangements for TAFE Transition Courses be examined and a more equitable and workable system of service provision be negotiated as a matter of urgency between DSE and TAFE.

7. School transition teams encourage and assist students with disabilities in transition to establish firm links with generic and/or special post school recreation and leisure programs before they leave school.

8 School and community based recreation and leisure programs focus on developing natural supports for students with disabilities in the community

9. Alternative and valued functional curriculum options developed through the transition project and accredited by the Board of Studies be coordinated, and a resource pool be established for sharing these curricula.

10. Post school options for youth with high support needs be developed in both urban and rural communities, that take into account the special needs and requirements of this group.

OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

There has been growing concern that school programs for youth with disabilities should be outcome oriented, and should promote the smooth transition of students from the schooling system to successful community adjustment and adult life roles. For students with disabilities, this transition phase has been identified as particularly critical, since these youth have generally been acknowledged to experience poorer post school outcomes than their nondisabled peers.

Employment has long been identified as a critical outcome measure of the schooling system, but interest in transition from school to community adjustment and adult life roles has resulted in a broader understanding of what is meant by a meaningful transition.

Most educators readily accepted the importance of employment as an outcome measure, since it was assumed that success in employment was related to overall success in adult life. It was logical, then, that secondary special education in the USA adopted, through the "Bridges Model" "an outcome oriented process encompassing a broad array of services and experiences that lead to employment" (Will, 1984:1).

Few would dispute the importance of employment as a key outcome. It is obvious that, despite significant changes in the current employment scene, young people still want full time work. However, there has been rising youth unemployment for 15 to 19 year olds in Australia since the 1970s. There has been a substantial decline in full time work opportunities, and as few as thirty two percent of school leavers in 1986 directly entered full time work (Davis, 1988). It is now widely accepted that individuals will need to be flexible, to change career paths several times in their working lives, and will require continuous or life long education and training.

Still, young people with and without disabilities have indicated their expectation that schools provide them with courses that build clear pathways to post school options and employment. This was the message given in a study prepared for the Australian Finn committee :

> Whilst there were considerable individual differences in the young people we spoke to, the vast majority were aware of the importance of school and education. Educational qualifications are acknowledged as the prerequisite for finding an effective and secure place in the workforce. Indeed, young people clearly see the role of the education system as providing them with skills which will aid their 'employability'. There is little interest in knowledge for knowledge's sake. The subjects in the secondary school curriculum which are valued are:
>
> - those which students felt had direct vocational relevance
> - those providing general knowledge or life skills which would be useful on leaving school
> - those which were the prerequisites for chosen tertiary or post secondary courses.
>
> (Motive Market Research, 1991)

Employment outcomes are important, but the purpose of schooling is far broader than simply preparation for employment. Finn (1986) identified three missions for schools. These were to prepare students with skills for (a) the social system in which they live, (b) for personally fulfilling lives, and (c) for the next phase of their lives, whether it be higher education or employment.

Halpern (1985; 1992) has consistently argued against adopting a narrow employment outcome focus. Instead he has advocated for outcomes to include the full array of adult roles that comprise quality of life. Such variables as residential status, social networks and personal satisfaction must be included. While it was assumed that these variables were related to and affected by employment, research has shown that, for people with disabilities, occupation, residential status and social support were basically unrelated to one another, and that personal satisfaction was basically unrelated to occupational success (Halpern, 1992; Halpern, Nave, Close & Nelson, 1986).

Many educators and researchers now agree that meaningful transition from school to adulthood must incorporate more than just employment outcomes. Transition involves post secondary education and training for real work, residential independence, individual competence in community living, and quality of life issues such as friendships, satisfaction and freedom of choice (Clark & Kolstoe, 1990; Edgar, 1987; 1988; Halpern, 1985;1992; Halpern, Close, & Nelson, 1986; Parmenter, 1988; 1992a; Wehman, 1990; Wehman, Moon & McCarthy, 1986).

The passage of US Public Law 101 - 476 in 1990 clearly accepted a broader conceptualisation of transition outcomes than simply employment:

> Transition services means a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation (Section 300.18).

Despite the growing concern that successful adult adjustment constitutes more than having a job, employment outcomes have predominated as the major concern of most special education follow up and follow along studies, and consequently most information to date relates to the employment area.

Follow up and Follow along Studies

Follow up/along studies or transition tracking projects are essential to monitor the effectiveness of the programs being implemented in schools and in the transition process. These outcome measures are required to guide both program and policy development.

Unfortunately, despite an educational environment that stressses the importance of program evaluation and quality assurance, little has been done to evaluate systematically the effectiveness of school practices and programs, and to use this information constructively to develop and implement sound policy and best practices.

Many now argue strongly for all school systems to regularly follow up/along their special education graduates, so that the effectiveness of school instruction, transition planning, adult service and employment efforts and quality of life issues can be assessed (Edgar, 1988; Halpern, 1992; Wehman, 1990; Wehman, Kregel & Barcus, 1985). Discovering if and why persons are not employed post school, examination of personal satisfaction issues and identification of any problem areas enables the existing programs to rethink what they are doing and look for more effective methods.

One Sydney based special school did follow up special school graduates on a regular basis from 1969 to 1974. The results were used to inform other students about opportunities post school, and to assess the effectiveness of the school program in social and vocational areas. The first survey in 1969 revealed major problems with inadequate vocational preparation of students, and extremely high job turnover was apparent. Subsequent changes in the school program were ratified by more positive outcome results in later follow ups. Greater job stability, better, more interesting work and more realistic job choices were detected (Wirth, 1974). When a need for more leisure time activities was discovered through these follow ups, the school was able to respond to the identified need by developing a sports program using both school and community links (Wirth, 1974).

The relevance and importance of such evaluation is obvious. Unfortunately most follow up/along studies have been spasmodic, isolated and restricted in scope and time scale. They have often been done at the goodwill and interest of a particular teacher or researcher, there has been no system or philosophical commitment to follow ups/along and therefore they have not been sustained over time, as staff changes and changes in priorities for resources have occurred (Searle & Parmenter, 1979).

A number of methodological flaws have been inherent in many of the studies, such that clear and convincing interpretation of the collective findings is difficult (Halpern, 1990). These flaws include the use of cross sectional rather than longitudinal designs; inappropriate sample sizes; inappropriate data collection techniques; carelessness in variable definition; too narrow a selection of outcomes variables, often focussing on employment alone; and failure to articulate a model of transition to guide the overall structure of the investigation (Halpern, 1990; 1992).

With these definition and methodological issues in mind, the intention, from the inception of the pilot Transition Project for students with disabilities, established in 1989 in NSW, was to evaluate the outcomes. A follow along system was to be used that could be implemented and then continued by schools, regions and State Departments.

Previous Research Findings

Early follow up studies have presented a bleak picture of youth with disabilities post school, particularly with regard to employment. Overall, youth with disabilities were found to have poorer employment rates than nondisabled peers, earned less pay, and generally were restricted to unskilled labour or service sector occupations with few benefits or advantages (Edgerton & Bercovici, 1976; Halpern, 1973; Limbrick, 1977; McFall, 1966; Peterson & Smith, 1960; Titus & Travis, 1975). Such results indicated that students with disabilities were not making the transition from schooling to community adjustment and adult life as successfully as had been expected.

Little wonder the US Federal Government, in its legislation stated

> ... These youth historically have not been adequately prepared for changes and demands of life after high school. In addition, few, if any, are able to access or appropriately use traditional transitional services. Few services have been designed to assist handicapped young people in their efforts to enter the labour force or attain their goals of becoming self sufficient adults, and contributing members to our society.
> PL 98 -199 Section 626

Employment Status

A number of follow up and follow along studies of graduates of special education have been carried out in the USA, all of which included employment as a major focus. Employment rates were found to vary, but to be significantly lower than those attained by non disabled peers.

A US Commission on Civil Rights Study (1983) reported fifty to seventy five per cent of all people with disabilities were unemployed. Other studies reported employment rates for youth with disabilities ranging from as low as thirteen per cent (Edgar, 1987) to a high sixty five per cent (Hasazi, Gordon & Roe, 1985). This was in comparison to rates attained by nondisabled peers of seventy to seventy five per cent (Edgar, 1988; Edgar, Levine, Levine & Dubey, 1988).

Most studies in Australia and overseas indicated that less than half of all youth with disabilities achieved full time employment within two years of leaving school (Bellamy, 1985; Edgar, 1987, 1988; Halpern, 1992; Hasazi, Gordon, Roe, Hull, Finck & Salembier, 1985; Hasazi, Preskill, Gordon & Collins, 1982; Limbrick, 1977; Roessler, Brolin & Johnson, 1990; Wirth, 1974). In those studies reporting higher employment rates, such as one in Colorado where sixty per cent of the recent special education graduates were working, high levels of underemployment and very poor wages predominated (Mithaug & Horiuchi, 1983).

Underemployment was also noted by Krupinski, Mackenzie, Meredith and Stoller (1973) in an Australian study that followed up young adults with an intellectual disability seven years after they had left the schooling system. Within the group considered potentially fully employable, only twenty five per cent had been employed for short periods of time, had changed their employment many times and had experienced prolonged periods of unemployment. Two thirds of the group judged capable of limited routine work had never worked, while those who had worked did so only sporadically.

A Sydney follow up study of the employment patterns of year 10 school leavers, special class and special school leavers and clients of a work preparation program revealed significant job instability among youth in their first years out of school, and most particularly among youth with intellectual disabilities leaving special class placements. The regular high school year 10 leavers appeared to take slightly longer to gain their first job, but then experienced greater job stability, higher job status and higher pay than the other groups. Greatest employment success for those with an intellectual disability was found to be enjoyed by graduates of a Work Preparation Centre, with sixty one per cent gaining full time employment, eleven per cent intermittent employment, and twenty six per cent sheltered employment. Youth with a disability who left Special Schools and Special Classes generally experienced less job stability, more and longer periods of unemployment, and poorer job status and pay (Ward, Parmenter, Debenham & Miller, 1977).

A disturbing feature is that a significant proportion of the employment secured by people with disabilities has occurred in seasonal, part time or intermittent jobs, and many have been found to be working below the minimum wage (Bellamy, 1985; Roessler, Brolin & Johnson, 1990). Roessler, Brolin and Johnson (1990) reported that the type of employment secured was usually in service and clerical positions, most of which were low paying and part time.

Bellamy (1985) who noted a high level of joblessness, pointed out that "those who do find work often participate in the secondary or marginal work force where wages, job security, advancement opportunities, and benefits are traditionally low." (p.475).

Although Edgar (1988) reported about sixty per cent of mildly disabled students found employment within a year of exiting the school system, he depicted a depressing scene. He cited increasing unemployment statistics, and disappearing heavy industry jobs that are being replaced by new jobs paying at poverty level wages - the very jobs that people with disabilities are competing with the nondisabled to attain. Edgar concluded there are simply not enough jobs available that pay "livable " wages for youth entering the job market. (Edgar, 1988:5).

A gloomy and uncertain future for youth with intellectual disabilities in the current economic climate has also been presented by May and Hughes (1985). They investigated the post school experiences of youth with moderate intellectual disabilities in Scotland. Students with disabilities who had, in previous decades and better economic conditions, gained successful employment, were now facing a different future. The best these students could anticipate was

> ... short lived placements, on various government sponsored schemes of dubious meaning and value, punctuated by successive and growing periods of unemployment as they move further beyond the range of emergency measures set up to assist the post school transition. (May & Hughes, 1985: 158).

This, according to May and Hughes, is also the fate of the great majority of present day school leavers. This depressing picture was further confirmed by the results of a longitudinal study in Scotland that investigated the adult adjustment of a large group of people with intellectual disabilities (Richardson, Koller & Katz, 1988).

Such results lend weight to Cornes' (1984) thesis that marginal groups in society will be further disadvantaged as labour markets alter and as consequent significant structural changes occur in the economies of the industrialised world. Parmenter (1992b) warned that such trends as an aging population, early retirement, high youth unemployment and permanent structural unemployment present an unpalatable picture for those attempting to place people with marginal skills in a highly competitive workforce.

Unemployment rates as a per cent of the total labour force for OECD countries over the past decade reveal a pessimistic trend, particularly for youth (aged 15-24 years). In the first quarter of 1992, youth unemployment as a percentage of the total labour force in OECD countries ranged from 18·6 per cent in Austria to 45·6 per cent in Italy. Australia had the second highest youth unemployment rate at 41·2 per cent (OECD, 1992).

The type of employment available has also changed. Leung (1992), addressing post secondary education issues for people with disabilities, reported that participation by people with disabilities in the U.S. labour force actually dropped from 1981 to 1989. Further, projections from the U.S. Department of Labour Statistics indicated that ninety per cent of net new jobs will be either information or service intensive. The need, Leung asserts, is for brain power, not physical dexterity.

Given the significant changes that are occurring in the labour market, Parmenter (1986, 1992b) has advocated for a balanced but proactive approach to the issue of employment for youth with disabilities. Young people with disabilities should be represented in the labour market to at least the same extent as young people without a disability. At the same time, Parmenter contends, labour market changes should be investigated so that future policies may be founded on a sound basis, and alternative forms of employment and life activity can be developed.

Factors Affecting Employment Outcomes

Apart from economic conditions that have a profound effect upon employment, a number of other factors have been found to influence the employment of people with disabilities.

a) Level of Disability

Students with learning difficulties appear to gain employment after high school more readily than do students with intellectual disabilities, but they, too, gravitate to unskilled and semiskilled jobs, where underemployment and dissatisfaction are common (Buchanan & Weller, 1984; Edgar, 1988; Roessler, Brolin & Johnson, 1990; Zigmund & Thornton, 1985).

Youth with mild disabilities generally have higher employment rates than youth with moderate and severe disabilities (Bellamy, 1985; Edgar, 1988; Hasazi, Roe & Gordon, 1985; James, 1992; Ward, Parmenter, Debenham & Miller, 1977; Wirth, 1979). One study found that students in resource room programs (low support needs) were employed fifty five per cent of their potential employment time while youth from special classes (higher support needs) were employed thirty five per cent of their potential employment time (Hasazi, Roe & Gordon, 1985).

b) Gender

A number of studies have consistently reported higher employment rates among males than females with disabilities, yet there is no difference in employment rates according to gender in the nondisabled population (Edgar, 1987; Hasazi, Gordon & Roe, 1985;James, 1992; Roessler, Brolin & Johnson, 1990; Wirth, 1979). In the Hasazi, Gordon & Roe study (1985), males were more likely to be employed than females by thirty per cent, and males were employed fifty eight per cent of their potential employment time while females were employed only thirty two per cent of their potential employment time. James (1992) found young men with disabilities in Hawaii were more likely to be employed and to earn higher wages than young women with disabilities.

c) Manner of Exiting High School

Data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study of Special Education Students (NLTS) in the U.S., involving 8,000 students, revealed that overall students with disabilities had significantly lower graduation rates and poorer outcomes than nondisabled peers. While the graduation rate for all students was seventy two per cent, the graduation rate for students with disabilities was fifty six per cent. Specific patterns were discernible, with higher percentages of students with emotional disturbances (55%) and intellectual disability (34%) dropping out of school early, and students with multiple handicaps (50%) and deaf/blindness (49%) aging out (Wagner, 1989).

Most studies found those who graduated had generally better outcomes than those who "dropped out". Poorest rates were found among those who met the legal age limit and "aged out". Hasazi, Roe and Gordon (1985), for example, discovered youth with mild disabilities who "aged out", (ie. who left school after the age of eighteen years) had poorer rates, being employed thirty per cent of time versus fifty two per cent for graduates and forty nine per cent for early leavers .

Youth with moderate intellectual disabilities in Scotland who stayed on at school appeared to have least prospects. For instance May and Hughes (1985) suggested:

> It was by and large the least able and less promising pupils, for whom the future was most bleak, who were more likely to remain on at school, not, it must be said, in any great hope that their prospects would thereby significantly improve, but principally in recognition of their need for continuing care and control. For these children and their families school afforded a temporary shelter from the storm. (p. 152).

The importance of having somewhere to transition to is critical. Parmenter and Knox (1989) in a post school options study, found there were severe limitations in the post school options available to people with disabilities. Most people were directed into sheltered employment, where wages and promotional opportunities were minimal, and information and cooperation between different agencies and departments were minimal. It is this lack of services postschool that influences parents of students with higher support needs to keep them at school as long as is legally possible.

Student perceptions of the relevance of their secondary studies to their interests, and the appropriateness of these studies to their abilities have been claimed to be important characteristics affecting staying on at school and the effectiveness of school performance and post school outcomes (Hahn, Danzberger & Lefkowitz, 1987; Weber, 1987; Wehlage, 1989; cited in Wagner, 1991).

d) Vocational Education/ Work Experience

Vocational education has been identified as a particularly relevant factor affecting employment outcomes for students with disabilities. American studies have shown that students with disabilities undertake substantially more vocational education than nonhandicapped peers (Hayward & Wirt, 1989; Wagner, 1991). Data from the NLTS indicated a higher participation rate in vocational education for older students with disabilities than for nondisabled peers, but also showed that increasingly, students with disabilities were undertaking their vocational education in regular education classes (Wagner, 1991).

Participation in vocational education prior to leaving school does appear to be positively related to employment status. A multiple regression analysis of employment outcomes for students with disabilities in Hawaii indicated that the variables making a significant contribution to the prediction of employment were vocational preparation, independent living skills and gender (James, 1990).

Other studies have indicated that the nature of the vocational education is critical. High school programs that focussed upon real work experience or vocational training in real jobs were more effective than career exploration opportunities (Hasazi, Gordon & Roe, 1985; Parmenter & Roberts, 1981). The presence of paid, part time jobs and unsubsidised summer jobs all significantly contributed to gaining employment post school, and to higher wages (Chadsey -Rusch, Rusch, & O'Reilly, 1991; Hasazi, Gordon & Roe, 1985; Hasazi, Gordon, Roe, Hull, Finck & Salembier 1985; Roessler, Brolin & Johnson, 1990).

The NLTS data also indicated that students with disabilities who were enrolled in occupationally oriented vocational education were more likely to stay on at school to graduation. Substantial differences in post school outcomes were then apparent. More students with disabilities who had undertaken such occupationally oriented vocational courses went on to post secondary vocational training, and more were in paid employment than youth who had not undertaken such courses (Wagner, 1991: 18 -19).

Multivariate analyses confirmed the positive relationship between positive post school outcomes and involvement in vocational education in the last year of secondary school. Involvement in work experience further increased the probability of employment for these individuals (Wagner, 1991:25 - 27). Secondary school vocational education was therefore identified as a positive educational intervention on school performance and post school outcomes (Wagner, 1991:28).

A series of follow ups investigating the outcomes of a Work Experience Program in a NSW Special School for students with mild intellectual disabilities between 1969 and 1976 clearly demonstrated improvements in outcomes as the program was refined and concentrated upon "on the job" experience. The number of job changes post school halved, and the numbers remaining in their first positions doubled. (Wirth, 1979 :200).

Work Preparation Programs for youth with mild intellectual disabilities have also demonstrated favourable employment outcomes can be achieved immediately after schooling, in spite of high youth unemployment (Black, 1984; Ward, Parmenter, Debenham & Miller, 1977; Ward, Parmenter, Riches & Hauritz, 1978; Ward, Parmenter, Riches & Hauritz, 1979). Although Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures showed a high 28·4 per cent unemployment rate among 15 - 19 year olds in September, 1983, a follow up of youth with mild intellectual disabilities from one work preparation program found sixty per cent (60%) were experiencing successful competitive employment. Another four per cent were continuing training through apprenticeships, fifteen per cent were in sheltered employment and twenty one per cent were unemployed. Little evidence of upward mobility in job status amongst the graduates was noted however, and wage levels were not considered (Black, 1984).

e) Manner of Finding Employment

The self - family - friend network has been frequently identified as most significant for gaining jobs. As many as eighty two per cent of the students in various studies found jobs through their personal networks (Hasazi, Gordon & Roe, 1985; Roessler, Brolin & Johnson, 1990; Wehman, Kregel & Seyfarth, 1985). Curriculum to capitalise upon this and teach job seekers how to identify and use their self - family - friend networks have been subsequently devised and trialed (Azrin & Besalele, 1980). These studies also found that few students with disabilities had contacted post school agencies for assistance.

Effective work experience programs can and do result in permanent employment positions. Of the 67 per cent of students employed full time after leaving one school work experience program, 60 per cent of the placements had been located by the school program, fifteen per cent through newspaper ads, and 25 per cent through relatives. The prominent role of the school in this process indicates the potential in the transition partnership. Parental support was still identified as a critical factor in maintaining employment (Wirth, 1979).

Edgar (1985) recognised the challenge for schools to engage in systematic transition planning for students leaving the schools, and to play an effective part, if not in actually finding jobs for students, then at least in handing them over to a receiving agency who can assist in this regard.

Use of generic and specialist services in job seeking and differing patterns of service utilisation appears to vary according to area (Bellamy, 1985). Roessler, Brolin and Johnson, (1990), reported that students who contacted Vocational Rehabilitation Services were more likely to secure a job through this service than through their self/family/friend network.

Australian research has identified that there is a need for greater cooperation and co-ordination between agencies concerned with meeting the needs of young people with disabilities making the transition from school to adult life (Parmenter & Knox, 1989).

f) Location

Employment rates were found to vary significantly across rural, urban and metropolitan areas. Hasazi, Roe and Gordon (1985) for example, found higher unemployment rates and fewer employment related services in rural areas in Vermont.

Further Training Needs

Areas specifically identified by youth post school as ones in which they required further instruction included vocational skills, social and independent living skills . These findings indicate the need for further development in the school curriculum (Mithaug, Horiuchi & Fanning, 1985).

Post Compulsory Education

The National Longitudinal Transition Study of Special Education Students (NLTS) found the post compulsory education rates of youth with disabilities to be significantly lower than for nondisabled peers one year after school leaving. The poorest rates were found among youth with deaf/blindness, intellectual disability and multiple handicaps. Employment levels were also markedly below those attained by youth without disabilities (Wagner, 1989).

Preliminary work by James (1992) suggests that parent expectations, severity of disability and independent living skills are key variables in the whether or not youth with disabilities progress on to post secondary education.

Andrews (1991; 1992) identified eight major barriers to participation in post compulsory education and training for people with disabilities in Australia. These were a lack of clarity and decisions by tertiary authorities and institutions about their role and provisions for students with disabilities; a low level of student identification impeding planning and support; an inappropriate approach to students' need for support; an absence of modified and alternative curriculum and courses; an absence of constructive links between schools and post-secondary education and training institutions; a lack of liaison and recruitment programs to increase participation; inadequate physical access and a lack of post school options for students with disabilities. Andrews asserts that equity measures will not work unless they are adequately planned and resourced.

The need for careful planning, resources and interagency cooperation and collaboration were also identified by Riches (1992a) as essential if the participation rates in post compulsory education and training of students with disabilities were to improve.

Residential and Social Adjustment

Most youth with disabilities tend to live at home with their parents after leaving high school. While this is true for many nondisabled youth, youth with disabilities appear more dependent on family for residential status for a longer time period (Affleck, Edgar, Levine & Kortering, 1989; Hasazi, Gordon & Roe, 1985; Roessler, Brolin & Johnson, 1990).

Social isolation, loneliness and lack of outside interests has been emerging as a disconcerting variable (Ford, Parmenter & Koop, 1992; Halpern, 1992b; Horrocks, 1991; Knox & Parmenter, 1992; Wirth, 1979). It appears that schools should be doing much more to promote daily living and personal/social competencies among students with disabilities, before they leave school (Roessler, Brolin & Johnson, 1990; Wirth, 1979).

This could have ramifications for other areas, such as criminal behaviour, since higher arrest rates have been reported for some youth with disabilities during the first few years out of school (Halpern, 1992b; Ward, Parmenter, Riches & Hauritz, 1978).

Quality of Life

Quality of life for people with disabilities has been of growing concern over recent years (Brown, Bayer & MacFarlane, 1988; McGrew & Bruininks, 1991; Parmenter, 1988; 1992a; Schalock, 1990). Halpern (1992a) reviewed the quality of life outcomes as reported in forty one refereed journal articles of follow up and follow along studies published between 1975 to 1990. He examined fourteen content areas in three basic quality of life domains:

- physical and material well being,
- performance of a variety of adult roles, and
- a sense of personal fulfilment,.

Halpern found all studies (100%) had examined career and employment. Financial security had been reported in approximately three quarters of the studies (76%). Educational attainment (graduating or dropping out) had been reported in fifty six per cent the studies, and the only other area addressed by a significant number of studies was personal relationships and social networks (44%).

Attempts are now being made to develop theoretical models of quality of life, which, it is anticipated, will be able to guide policy makers and practitioners in establishing best practices than can result in better outcomes. One factor often ignored, that may prove to be of critical importance relates to personal satisfaction (McGrew & Bruininks, 1991).

The paucity of information available in a number of quality of life studies led Halpern (1990a) to articulate a general model for transition programs. Six types of information were identified as critical to undertake a comprehensive analysis of this model, particularly to understand paths of influence between variables in each domain. Information is collected while the student is still at school as well as after the student has left school. Types of information required are:

1. client and family demographic information
2. school services received
3. school outcomes achieved
4. quality of life in school
5. post-school services received
6. quality of life after leaving school

Preliminary results from such analysis have registered poor relationships between objective domains such as employment and subjective domains such as personal satisfaction. Halpern suggests that transition planning may not be addressing student interests and choice sufficiently, and that stronger relationships may eventuate when personal choice and preferences are more carefully adhered to (Halpern, 1992a).

Roessler et al (1990) also discovered subjective quality of life as unrelated to any employment variables (percent of time working or employer evaluations). They concluded that entry level, minimum wage jobs provide little relief from poverty status. Improved employment opportunities may, they believe, change the nature of the relationship between perceived quality of life and employment outcome.

The discouraging patterns of post-secondary employment outcome data that have prevailed regarding youth with disabilities after they have left school (Hasazi, Gordon & Roe, 1895; Wehman, Kregel & Seyfarth, 1985; Wehman, Moon, Everson, Wood & Barcus, 1988), led Edgar (1987, 1988) to seriously question secondary special education.

> Analysis of data collected in recent follow-up studies of handicapped students who left school indicates that the transition process is incomplete: Few handicapped students move from school to independent living in communities. Secondary special education programs appear to have little impact on students' adjustment to community life. More than 30 per cent of the students enrolled in secondary special education programs drop out..
>
> (Edgar, 1987: 555).

In examining the plight of those with mild intellectual disabilities in particular, Edgar questioned the special education secondary system. He criticised both the inclusion or integration movement and the segregated special education programs. Although supporting many of the current schemes such as increased vocational education, mentor programs to build natural supports. etc., Edgar called for the development of a meaningful *alternative* secondary option for youth who are not headed directly for College - that is for all high risk youth (disabled and non disabled alike). This alternative option, he argued, must be highly socially valued, provide opportunities for youth to engage in activities valued by the adult society, focus on problem solving and coping skills, provide opportunities to learn, practice, and demonstrate valued vocational skills, and include ongoing mentor support systems (Edgar, 1988:6).

Other educators have also criticised special education programs for an overemphasis upon academic subjects, at the expense of functional training for adult roles such as parent/spouse, citizen, worker, or person of leisure. The results are students with disabilities who are poorly prepared for adult responsibilities, and reduced quality of life (Brolin, 1989; Roessler, Brolin & Johnson, 1990). Their solution is a career education curriculum with more emphasis upon vocational training and work exposure.

While not satisfied with the outcomes obtained, Wehman (1990) disagreed with Edgar's conclusions about the schooling system. Instead he pointed out that the problems were broader than the education system alone, and stressed the need to put elements of transition together in a coherent fashion.

Critical factors which have been found to influence successful transition into adult living are:

1) The quality and appropriateness of student preparation.

2) Formalised plans involving the student, parents and/or advocates, and the entire array of community agencies that are responsible for providing services.

3) The availability and quality of adult services (both linkages and post secondary services).

4) Multiple quality options for gainful employment (competitive, supported etc) and meaningful post school training.

5) Quality options to promote the level of community adjustment in a number of important areas, such as residential arrangements, leisure pursuits, personal/social behaviour etc. (O.E.C.D. 1988; R.R.T.C., 1988; Wilcox & Bellamy, 1982)

The NSW Transition Project

The introduction of the NSW Transition Project in 1989 was an attempt to address the transition period from school to adulthood for students with disabilities systematically. Funded under the Special Education Plan, opportunity was provided to pilot a system that could draw upon the best practices of other transition initiatives worldwide.

In the NSW model, Transition has three distinct phases. In the first phase the role of the school is to provide good foundational services, generally considered fundamental to later success. In the middle or transition phase, students who are nearing school completion are assisted to prepare for the post school environment in a range of areas, and interagency planning and cooperation is encouraged. In the third phase, the student leaves the school setting and is assisted where necessary to make the transition to life as an adult in the general community.

Keys to effective transition have been identified as the individual transition planning system, appropriate school curriculum, planning in the context of the local community, and interagency cooperation and planning (C.E.R.I., 1988; Edgar, 1987; Halpern, 1989; Moon, Diambra & Hill, 1990; Parmenter & Riches, 1991; Patton and Browder, 1988; Riches, 1992a; Wehman, 1990; Wehman, Kregel and Barcus, 1985; Wehman, Moon, Everson, Wood & Barcus, 1988).

Relevant personnel from pilot schools were introduced to the philosophy and best practices of why, what, when, where and how to assess, plan and teach students. The individual planning process was introduced into the schools and implemented for each student with a disability identified in the classrooms, long and short term objectives were determined for each student, and curriculum areas and instructional activities planned to meet these objectives (Glenday, Reardon & Riches, 1990; Parmenter & Riches, 1991).

Within certain curriculum areas, additional transition services were initiated that could be accessed by students with disabilities. These transition services aimed to provide appropriate curriculum and instruction in relevant environments, and to coordinate better the transition from school to adulthood. The new transition services funded under the project were in the vocational training area and consisted of TAFE vocational courses, Job Coaching and Enclaves established and operated within community employment settings (Ling & Riches, 1992; Riches & Parmenter, 1990).

Community Transition Teams were also established in the pilot areas. These community based teams enable interagency cooperation and planning to occur at the local level. Each team identifies local present and future transitional needs and priorities, and works towards enhancing the capacity of schools, service agencies, employers and parents/caregivers to deliver effective transition services to meet the needs of that community. Consistently these teams have identified information needs and gaps in the postschool options for students with disabilities as the highest priorities (Riches & Parmenter, 1991; Riches, 1992b).

The range and extent of initiatives and programs emanating from the NSW Transition Project has been far greater than originally anticipated. The collection of follow along data however, was always regarded as an essential component of the evaluation. Examination of the outcomes experienced by these youth with disabilities as they make the passage from secondary school to community living and early adulthood are critical for evaluating the effectiveness of the programs being implemented in the schools and the transition process.

METHOD

The NSW Transition Project commenced operation in March, 1989, in four pilot sites. Three sites were in Metropolitan Sydney, in the Inner City West, the Hills District and Western Sydney, and one site was in the western country region of Orange. All students who participated in the pilot Transition Project during 1989 or 1990 and who left school during or at the end of those years were targeted for follow up at the end of 1991, when they had been out of school for twelve months to two years.

A total of sixteen government schools were involved, three schools for specific purposes, and thirteen secondary schools at which there were special classes for students with intellectual and physical disabilities. One student with a visual impairment who had participated in the transition project and who was fully integrated in an additional school was also included in the population to be followed up.

Instrumentation

The instruments and procedures chosen were a revised version of the Minnesota Post School Follow Up system. This system had been developed and trialed by the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota and funded by the Minnesota Department of Education's Unique Learner Needs section. The overall goals of this follow up system were closely aligned to those of the NSW Transition Project. They were to:

1. Provide an ongoing means by which local special education programs can routinely collect and report on the post school outcomes of former special education students

2. Make available meaningful information that can be used by Community Transition Teams in planning present and future services

3. Gather reliable information that can be shared with policy makers and state agency personnel to enhance awareness of the post school experiences of youth with disabilities

4. Make available potential school effectiveness measures of secondary special education programs in meeting the post school needs of youth with disabilities

5. Develop program and policy recommendations for the Department of Education on statewide initiatives to improve transition services and interagency planning efforts.

The survey instruments and follow up procedures had been field tested in rural, suburban and urban communities in the state of Minnesota. These were subsequently adapted for use in NSW by URS staff, in collaboration with staff from the Special Education Directorate, NSW Department of School Education.

The system consisted of two parts

Part 1: Student information and school follow along data, and

Part 2: Outcome data obtained from telephone interviews.

Part 1: School Data were concerned with biographical details and schooling provisions, such as type of school placement, curriculum and instruction received and manner of exiting school. This information was gathered from school records using the Student Information Form (Form B - see Appendices).

Part 2. Telephone Interview. The telephone interview was concerned with the former students' current activities and experiences since leaving school, particularly in the areas of employment and post compulsory education and training as well as quality of life issues such as recreation and leisure activities, living situation and friendships. This followed a structured interview format (Form A - see Appendices).

Procedures

A total of 98 former students had been involved in the transition project in the four pilot sites and had left school at the end of 1989 or throughout 1990. Data from the schools were gathered at the end of 1991 concerning all these former students. This was undertaken by URS personnel and involved accessing information school documentation, from Transition Coordinators and school teachers, and from an examination of Individual Transition Plans (ITPs) where necessary.

Some information was difficult to locate, particularly that relating to curriculum and instruction experiences, and manner of leaving school. No documentation was kept in the schools recording this information, apart from ITPs set up under the project. Often the information had to be gained from interviewing teachers. Consequently schools in the Transition Project have now been asked to record this information as a regular part of their documentation system.

The last known addresses and telephone numbers of all former students involved in the Transition Project were gathered for the telephone follow up. At this time schools were asked to assist by forwarding a letter informing former students of the imminent follow up and asking if they would be prepared to participate. This letter was on school letterhead, indicated that the results would be useful to the school in planning its future programs, and was to be signed by the students' former teacher/s. Not all schools were willing to send this letter, especially some large metropolitan secondary schools.

Attempts were made to contact and interview all ninety eight former students. The structured interviews were conducted by an individual experienced in dealing with adolescents with a range of disabilities. Interviews were held between November 1991 through January 1992. These usually involved a ten to fifteen minute telephone interview, most often at night or on the weekends when individuals could be contacted more easily.

A number of individuals were unavailable and were rung back at times nominated by the contact. Numerous attempts were made to contact individuals when there was no response and attempts were made to locate families who had moved. This proved difficult as there was generally no forwarding number and no listing in the telephone directory. Some families had moved interstate, without leaving a forwarding address.

Survey Response Rate

A total of fifty seven former students, their families or informed others were successfully contacted and interviewed by telephone. This represented fifty eight per cent (58%) of the total population. In addition three former students were deceased (3·1%) and two former students were contacted but refused to be interviewed (2·0%).

A total of thirty six former students (36·7%) had not been contactable. Four (4·1%) of these former students had moved out of the state, and a further eighteen (18·4%) were found to have moved since leaving school and were not at the given number or whereabouts was unknown. Two (2·0%) did not have the telephone connected, and twelve (12·2%) were unable to be reached on the given number. This was despite numerous attempts to contact them over several weeks and using different time slots (see Table 1 for details).

Table 1: Interview response rates

Status	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
Telephone Interview Completed	57	58·2	58·2
Deceased	3	3·1	61·3
Refused to be Interviewed	2	2·0	63·3
Moved out of State	4	4·1	67·4
Unable to be Contacted	32	32·6	100·0
Total	98	100.0	

The survey was conducted during the December - February period, when it is possible that many families were absent on annual leave. A telephone survey at a different time of year may have resulted in a higher response rate.

Information Source for Follow Up

Twenty three of the former students (40%) completed the interview alone while another six were assisted by a family member to complete the interview. Twenty interviews (35%) were completed by a family member other than the former student and eight (14%) were completed by another informed person such as a caregiver in a group home (see Figure 1).

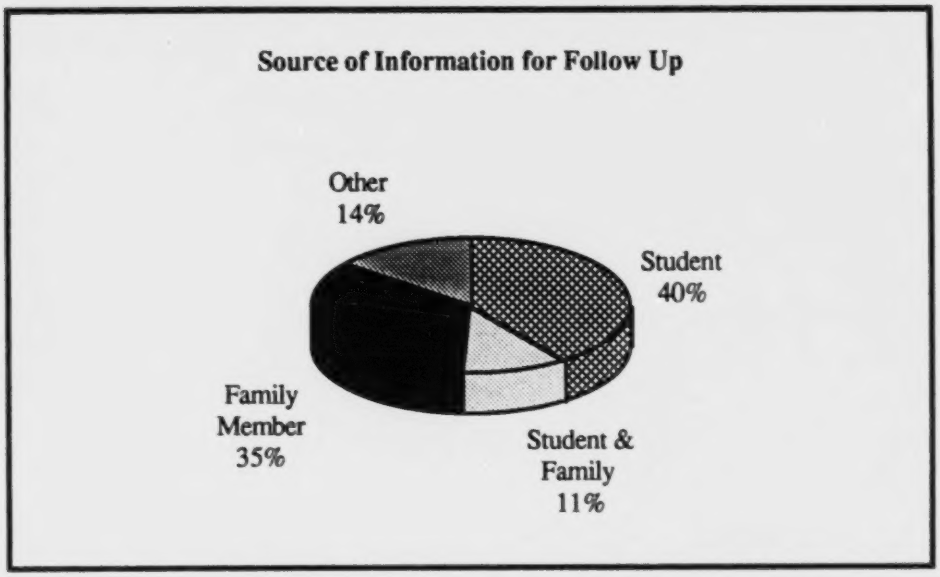

Figure 1: Information source for follow up/along

Significant differences in the information source were apparent according to level and type of disability, with family members or other informed persons more frequently completing the interview for former students who had high support needs ($X^2 = 43{\cdot}7$, df = 15, Significance = ·000). The poor communication skills of these youth with disabilities was the reason for this high rate of involvement from family and caregivers (See Table 2 for details).

Table 2 : Source of information for the survey according to disability group

Source of Information	Mild Intell	Mod Intell	Severe Intell	Physical Disab	Multiple Disab	Total
FORMER STUDENT	15	3	3	2	0	23 40%
BOTH FORMER STUDENT AND FAMILY MEMBER	2	2	0	2	0	6 11%
A FAMILY MEMBER	4	12	2	2	0	20 35%
SOME OTHER INFORMED PERSON	0	2	3	0	3	8 14%
TOTAL	21 36·8%	19 33·3%	8 14·1%	6 10·5%	3 5·3%	57 100%

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

Disability Type

Approximately eighty seven percent of all the former students in the transition project had an intellectual disability, with well over half of this number being in the mild category. Of the remaining students, nine percent had physical disabilities, one percent had sensory disabilities and three percent had multiple disabilities (both intellectual and physical).

Significant differences were noted in the disabilities of the sample interviewed to the original population. While the majority of former students contacted in the sample had an intellectual disability (51/ 57 or 89·5%), over half of these had moderate or severe intellectual disabilities (27 former students or 47·3%) (See Table 3). Analysis of the response rates revealed that the greatest number of former students not able to be contacted were those with mild intellectual disabilities. Less than half of this original group was represented. A number of students with moderate intellectual disabilities were also unable to be contacted, as was the only student with visual impairment.

Table 3: Disabilities of former students in transition population and sample

	Transition Population 1989 -1990		Sample Interviewed	
Type of Disability	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Mild Intellectual	47	47·9	21	36·8
Moderate Intellectual	29	29·6	19	33·3
Severe Intellectual	9	9·2	8	14·0
Physical	9	9·2	6	10·5
Multiple (Intellectual and Physical)	3	3·1	3	5·3
Visual Impairment	1	1·0	0	0
Total	98	100·0	57	100·0

In contrast a higher proportion of former students who had multiple disabilities, physical disabilities or severe intellectual disabilities were able to be contacted and included in the sample (see Table 3 and Figure 2 for details of population and sample numbers by disability groups). Consequently the outcome results gained from this sample are representative of the more disabled group of the pilot transition population. Any interpretation of results must be made with this understanding.

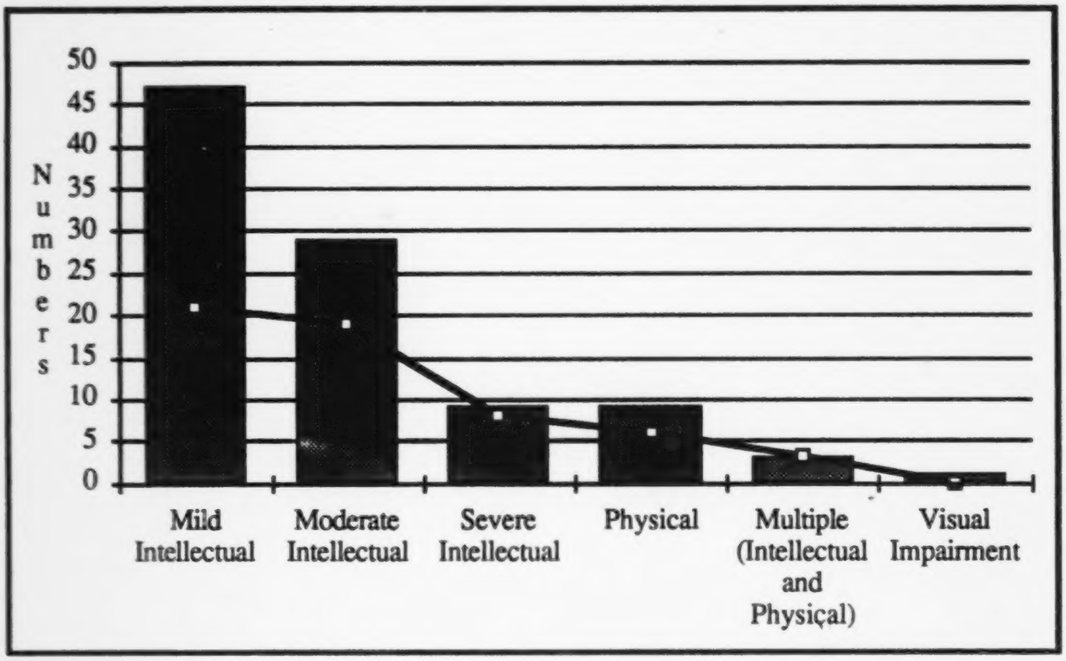

Figure 2: Type and level of disability of youth in the pilot transition population and the sample interviewed

Geographic Region

The largest number of students came from the western metropolitan area of Sydney, as two pilot sites were situated in this region. The other sites were in the metropolitan east region of Sydney and the western region of NSW. No differences were found in the response rates according to region (see Table 4).

Table 4: Numbers of students by Department of School Education Region

	Population		Sample Interviewed	
Region	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Met East	22	22·4	11	19·3
Met West	60	61·2	37	65·0
Western	16	16·3	9	15·8
Total	98	100·0	57	100·0

Gender

The population consisted of sixty four males (65·3%) and thirty four females (34·7%). Thirty seven interviewees (65%) were male and twenty (35%) were female (See Figure 3). There was no difference in the sex distribution of the population and the sample interviewed.

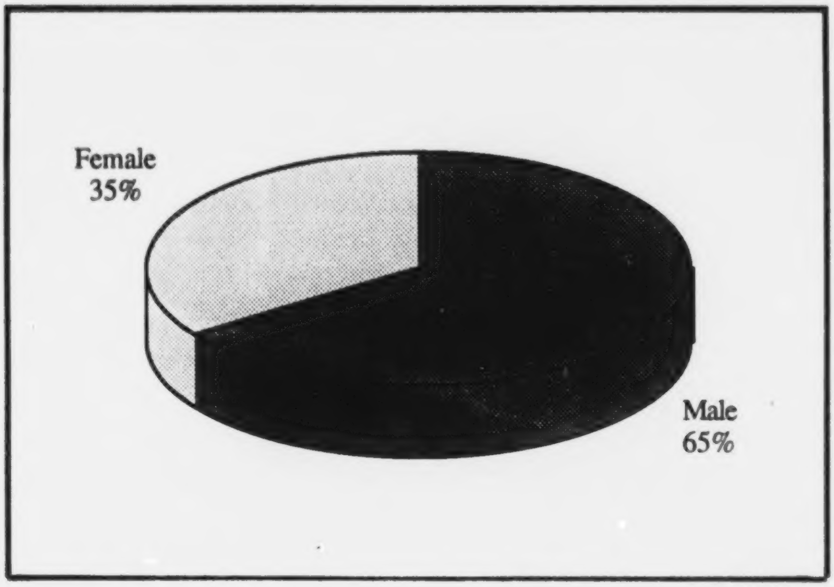

Figure 3: Genger of youth with disabilities interviewed

Age at Leaving School and Time Out of School

Student ages at time of leaving school ranged from 15 to 19 years, with a mean of 17 years 2 months and median of 17 years. The sample interviewed was very similar, and averaged 17 years 5 months at the time of leaving school, while the median was 17 years.

Former students had been out of school for one to two years at the time of survey, so that age at the point of follow up ranged from between 16 to 21 years. The more time that had elapsed since leaving school however, the smaller the percentage of former students who were located. The sample therefore consisted primarily of youth with disabilities who had been out of school for approximately one year, and were therefore around 18 to 19 years of age.

Table 5: Length of time since leaving school for population and sample

Time since Leaving School	Population		Sample Interviewed	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
6 to 12 MONTHS	77	78·6	48	84·2
BETWEEN 1 TO 2 YEARS	21	21·4	9	15·8
TOTAL	98	100·0	57	100·0

Ethnicity

Several Aboriginal youth had been involved in the transition project, as were youth from five different ethnic backgrounds. These were Italian, Greek, Lebanese, Maltese and Spanish. There was no difference in ethnicity between the sample and the pilot transition population from which the sample was drawn (See Table 6).

Of those youth interviewed, three were of Aboriginal descent (5·3%), while ten came from non English speaking backgrounds (17·5%). Seven individuals spoke a language other than English at home, four spoke Italian, one Lebanese and one Spanish.

Table 6: Ethnicity of population and sample

	Population		Sample Interviewed	
Nationality	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Aboriginal/Torres St. Islander	6	6·1	3	5·3
Australian	74	75·5	43	75·4
Non English (NESB)	16	16·3	10	17·5
Unknown	2	2·0	1	1·8
Total	98	100·0	57	100·0

Type of School Placement

The majority of all former students in the project had attended special classes (48%) or special schools (47%). Only five students had been fully integrated in regular classes, four of whom had physical disabilities and one of whom had a sensory disability. Only two of these youth were able to be interviewed (see Table 7).

The high percentage of students with disabilities attending special classes and schools reflected the NSW education system practices as well as the fact that these students were more easily identified for inclusion in the pilot transition project.

A higher proportion of individuals from special schools was represented in the sample (56%), while the greatest attrition rate concerned youth who had been in special classes in regular high schools (See Figure 4 for details). These were also youth with mild or moderate intellectual disabilities.

Table 7: Level of former school placement for total group and sample

School Placement	Transition Population		Sample Interviewed	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Regular Class	5	5·1	2	3·5
Special Class f/t	47	48·0	23	40·4
Special School	46	46·9	32	56·1
Total	98	100·0	57	100·0

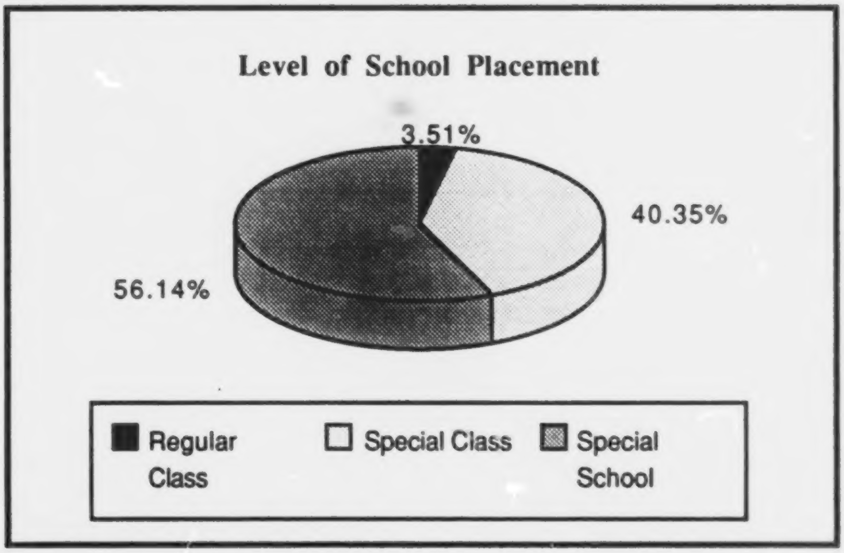

Figure 4: Level of school placement for sample interviewed

Manner of Leaving School

Data from the schools regarding the manner in which students left school revealed that the majority of both the population and the sample interviewed had been assisted through the Transition Project to make the transition from school to another training or employment program (55% and 61% respectively).

40

A number of students had met the legal age limit (18 years for NSW) and aged out (17% for the total population and 23% for the sample). These tended to be students with high support needs from special schools. Very few youth with disabilities in the transition project had completed formal accreditation (6% of the total group and 3.5% of the group interviewed).

Some former students had dropped out of school with no accreditation and before reaching 18 years. Several had also transferred out of the district. Proportionately fewer of those who had dropped out or transferred out had been able to be contacted for follow up. (See Table 8 and Figure 5).

Table 8: Manner of leaving school

	Population		Sample Interviewed	
Manner of Leaving	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Graduate with HSC or SC accreditation	1 5	6·1	- 2	- 3·5
Transition to other program	54	55·1	35	61·4
Age out	17	17·3	13	22·8
Transfer	7	7·1	2	3·5
Drop Out	11	11·2	4	7·0
Unknown	3	3·0	1	1·8
Total	98	100·0	57	100·0

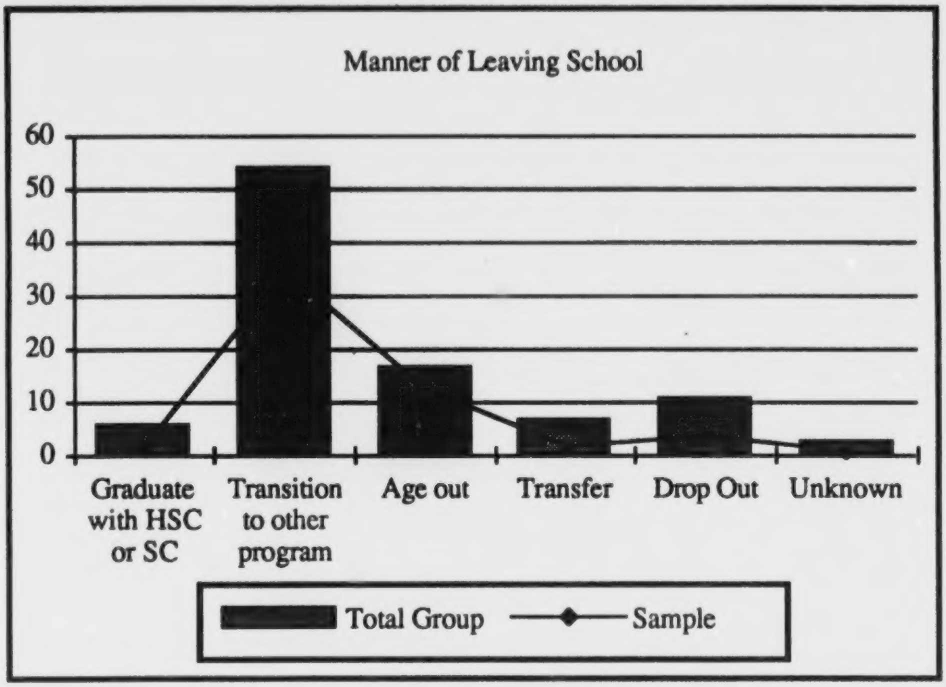

Figure 5: Frequencies for total group and sample interviewed by Manner of leaving school

Significantly different patterns in the manner of leaving school were apparent according to type and level of disability (p=·000).

Mild Intellectual Disabilities

Former students who had a mild intellectual disability for example had in the main been assisted to transition to employment or another program (16/21), one aged out (1/21), two transferred (2/21) and two dropped out of school (2/21) (see Figure 6a.)

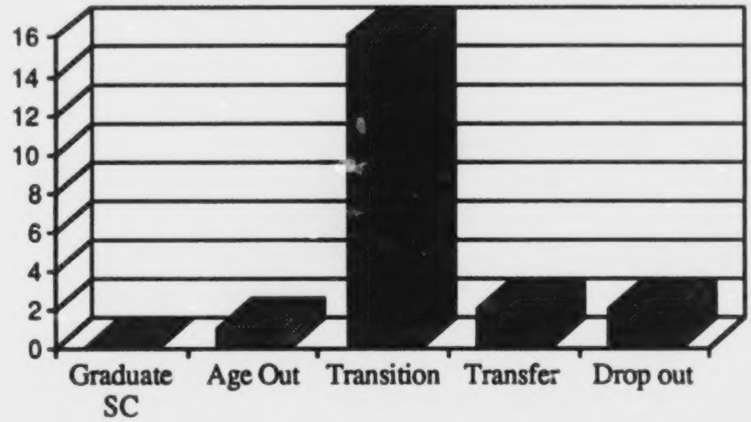

Figure 6a: Manner of leaving school for those with mild intellectual disabilities (N=21)

Moderate Intellectual Disabilities

Nearly all former students with moderate intellectual disabilities had been assisted to make the transition from school to post school (17/19). One youth had aged out (1/19) and the manner of leaving for the other youth was unknown. (See Figure 6b).

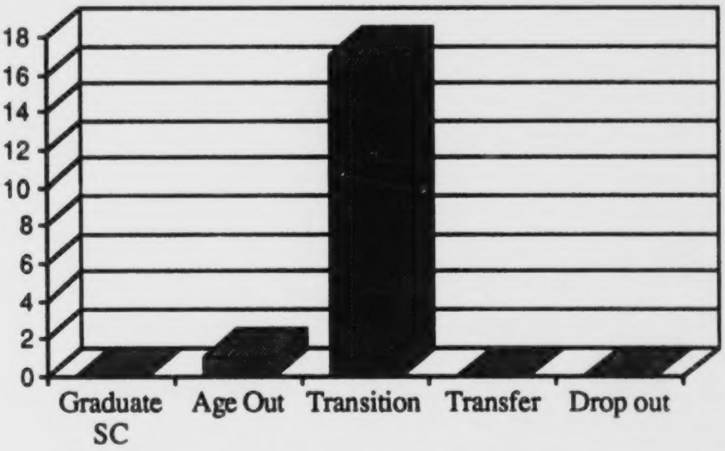

Figure 6b: Manner of leaving school for those with moderate intellectual disabilities (N=19)

Severe Intellectual Disabilities

Of those with severe intellectual disabilities, six aged out (6/8), one was assisted to transition (1/8) and one dropped out of school (1/8) (See Figure 6c).

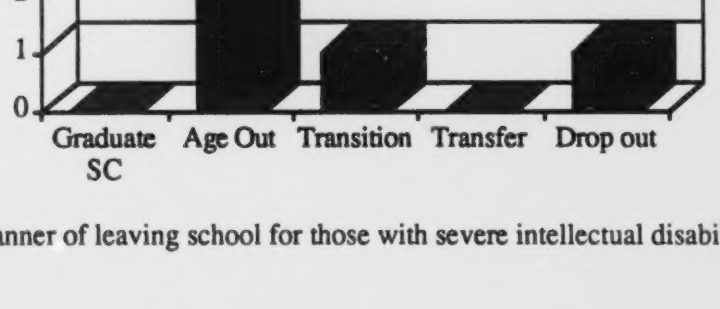

Figure 6c: Manner of leaving school for those with severe intellectual disabilities (N=8)

Physical Disabilities

Of the six youths who had physical disabilities, two graduated with school certificates (2/6), two aged out (2/6), one "transitioned" (1/6) and one dropped out of school (1/6). (See Figure 6d).

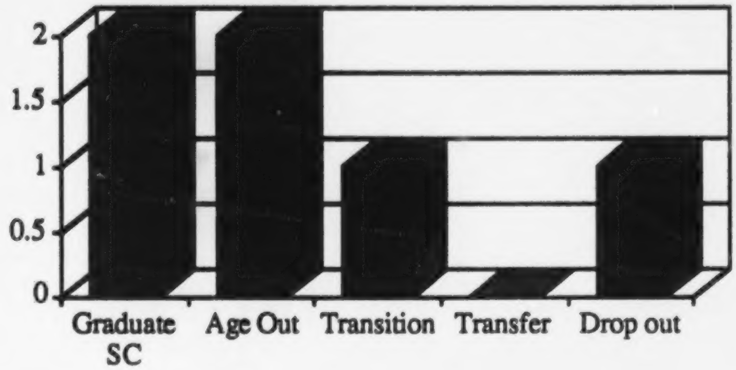

Figure 6d: Manner of leaving school for those with physical disabilities (N=6)

Multiple Disabilities

All three youths with multiple disabilities met the legal age limit and aged out (3/3) (See Figure 6e).

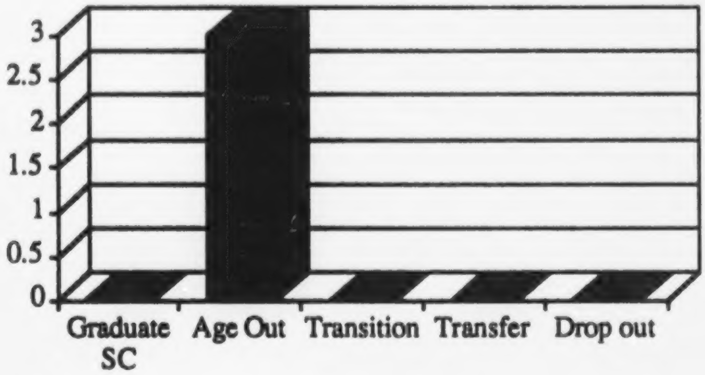

Figure 6e: Manner of leaving school for those with multiple disabilities (N=3)

SECONDARY SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Data on the type of secondary school program followed by each student in the last years of school were gathered from several sources, individual transition plans, (ITPs) other relevant school documentation and teacher interviews. Under the transition project each student with a disability were required to have an individual transition plan (ITP). This plan identified the curriculum areas to be addressed in a twelve month period. These were examined to determine the curriculum areas addressed in the second last and the last year of schooling.

Numerous difficulties were encountered in gaining reliable information for the second last year before the students left school, as generally ITPs had not been in place. Moreover there had been many staff changes and poor documentation of programs of study. The unreliability of the data relating to the second last year of study has precluded them from further analyses.

Examination of the school curriculum areas followed by all 98 students with disabilities in their last year of school revealed a strong emphasis had been placed upon functional curriculum addressing various life skills. This was in place of the traditional academic curriculum followed by the majority of non disabled students.

Only a small number of students (10 or 10.2%) had followed a traditional academic path, and only four of these were involved 100 percent of the time with academic subjects. For the remaining six, the percentage of time spent on academic subjects ranged from ten to eighty percent. The small number following an academic path related to the fact that most of the students involved had been in special classes or special schools, rather than fully integrated into regular schools (see Table 9).

In addition, curriculum choices made under the individual transition planning process were to reflect the needs, preferences and interests of the student, as agreed by the team. The team consisted of the student, parents and advocates, teachers and other relevant personnel. Thus the curriculum choices detailed here represent in fact the choices made under the transition planning system.

The majority of former students (83.7%) had been involved in some type of vocational training. This accounted for between twenty to eighty percent of their total instruction time. Sixty one percent of the former students spent over forty percent of their time in vocational training, while forty five percent spent over half their time in the employment related activities. This included work experience both at school and in community sites, TAFE Transition Courses and on site job training with the assistance of a job coach.

Functional academics, recreation and leisure skills, community living skills and personal management skills also figured strongly in the curriculum areas addressed by the schools. No real differences in curriculum patterns were noted between the total group of ninety eight for whom information was available and the sample interviewed (see Table 9). Significant differences in curriculum choices were noted, however, between the various disability groups sampled.

Table 9: School curriculum areas covered in last year of school

	Last Year of School N= 98		Last Year of School N= 57	
School Curriculum	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Continuing Education - Academics	10	10·2	5	8·8
Continuing Educational - Functional Academics	62	63·3	36	63·2
Vocational Training	82	83·7	48	84·2
Community Living skills	60	61·2	37	64·9
Recreation and Leisure	62	63·3	38	66·7
Personal Management	55	56·1	35	61·4
Transport / travel	34	34·7	17	29·8

Regular Academic Subjects

These had been studied by five youths in the sample, two of whom had physical disabilities, two had a mild intellectual disability and 1 had a moderate intellectual disability. No youth with severe intellectual disabilities or multiple disabilities had taken academic subjects.

Functional Academics

Functional academics were undertaken by nineteen of the twenty one youth with mild intellectual disabilities. Since the other two had studied traditional academics, this means that all those with a mild intellectual disability in the sample studied some type of academics. In addition twelve youth with a moderate intellectual disability, two with a severe intellectual disability and three youths with physical disabilities also studied functional academics in their final year at school. The differing patterns found according to disability type and level in the academic and functional academic curriculum were significant ($X^2 = 16{\cdot}3$, df = 4, p = ·003).

Vocational Curriculum

The majority of youth with disabilities interviewed had been involved in some form of vocational instruction during their last year of school. This included all youth with mild (N=21) and moderate intellectual disabilities (N=19), half of those who had a severe intellectual disability (4/8), and two thirds of those with physical disabilities (4/6). Youth not involved in vocational training were those who had multiple disabilities (N=3), half of those with severe intellectual disabilities (4/8) and two who had a physical disability (2/6). Involvement in a vocational curriculum was found to be related to disability type and level of disability ($X^2 = 23{\cdot}1$, df = 4, p = ·000).

Community Living Curriculum

Most of the youth with higher support needs had been involved in some form of community living instruction in their last year of school. This included the majority of those with moderate intellectual disabilities (16/19), all those who had severe intellectual disabilities (8/8), and two thirds of those with physical disabilities (4/6) and multiple disabilities (2/3). In contrast only one third of those with mild intellectual disabilities were involved in community living skills instruction (7/21). ($X^2 = 15{\cdot}3$, df = 4, p = ·004).

Recreation and Leisure

Recreation and leisure was addressed to some extent for youth from all disability groups, and no significant difference was found between the groups (p=·08). This was a particularly important area however for youth with multiple disabilities, and all three youths received some instruction in this area.

Personal Management

Personal Management was a curriculum area addressed for a number of youth in all groups, and no differences were apparent according to disability (p= ·18).

Transport

Less youth were involved in transport and travel training. Most of those for whom this curriculum area was addressed had a moderate intellectual disability (N=10). Several had a mild intellectual disability (N=5). One youth with a severe intellectual disability and one with a physical disability also received instruction in this area. ($X^2 = 10{\cdot}6$, df = 4, p = ·03).

Curriculum Patterns for Disability Groups

Overall, all youth with mild intellectual disabilities had spent their last year of school learning some academics (traditional or functional) and participating in various vocational training options. In addition a number had been involved in a range of the other curriculum areas identified in the transition process. (See Figure 7a).

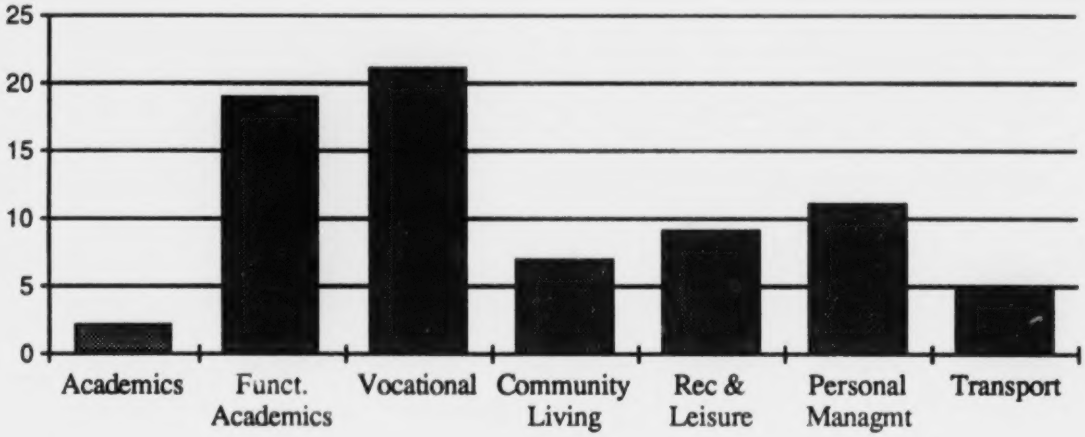

Figure 7a: Curriculum areas studied by youth with mild intellectual disabilities (N=21)

Youth with moderate intellectual disabilities had also been involved in a range of curriculum areas. All had participated in some form of vocational training and the majority of this group had been involved in a broad range of curriculum activities (see Figure 7b).

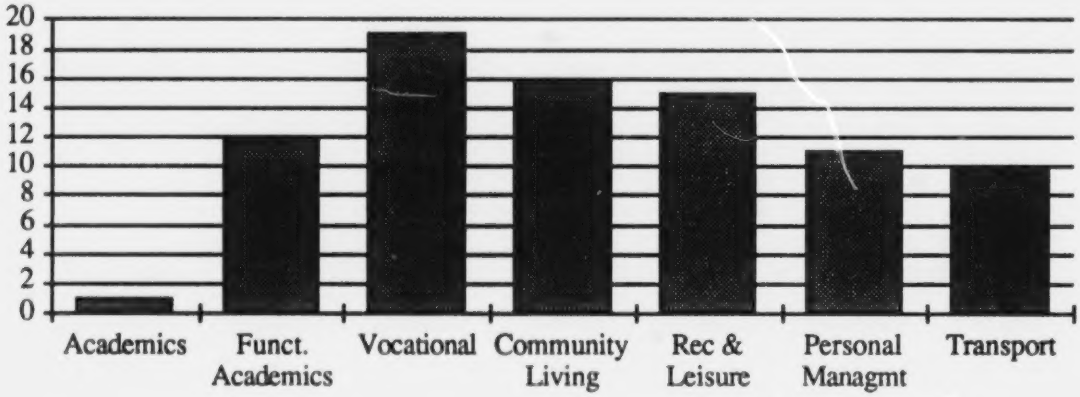

Figure 7b: Curriculum areas studied by youth with moderate intellectual disabilities (N=19)

Youth with severe intellectual disabilities had been predominantly involved in community living skills, personal management and recreation and leisure. Half had received some form of vocational instruction. Academics and transport did not feature strongly for this group. (See figure 7c for details).

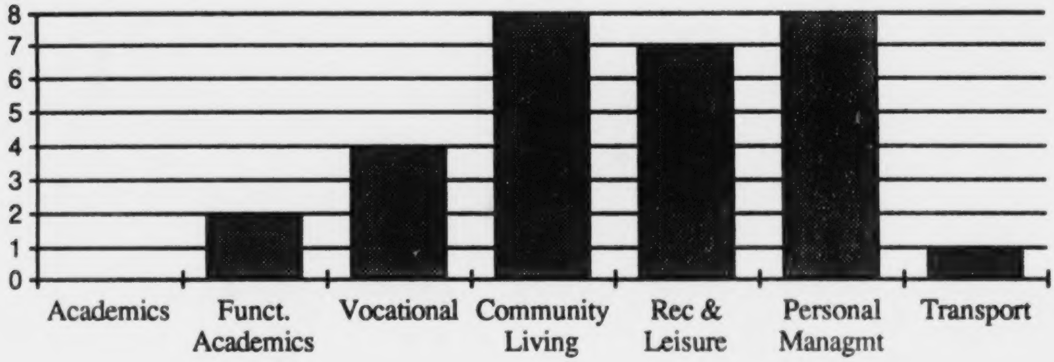

Figure 7c: Curriculum areas studied by youth with severe intellectual disabilities (N=8)

Youth with physical disabilities had varied greatly in the patterns of instruction they had received. Two had followed a full academic curriculum and gained a school certificate. The remaining youths had been involved in various curriculum combinations. (See Figure 7d).

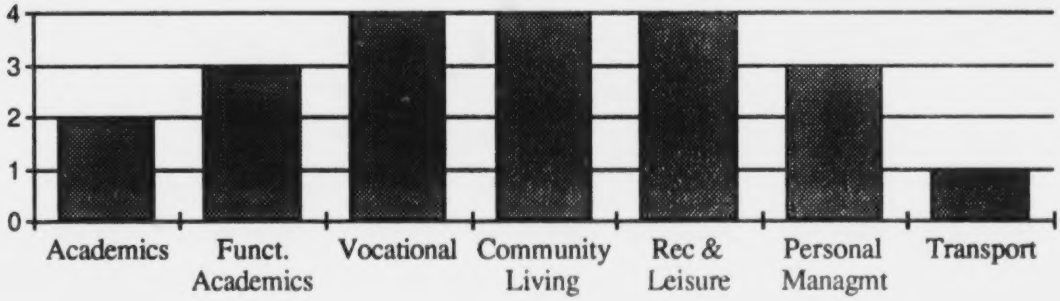

Figure 7d: Curriculum areas studied by youth with physical disabilities (N=6)

The three youths with multiple disabilities experienced the least extensive curriculum pattern, with only recreation and leisure, community living skills and personal management areas addressed in the final year of school. (See Figure 7e).

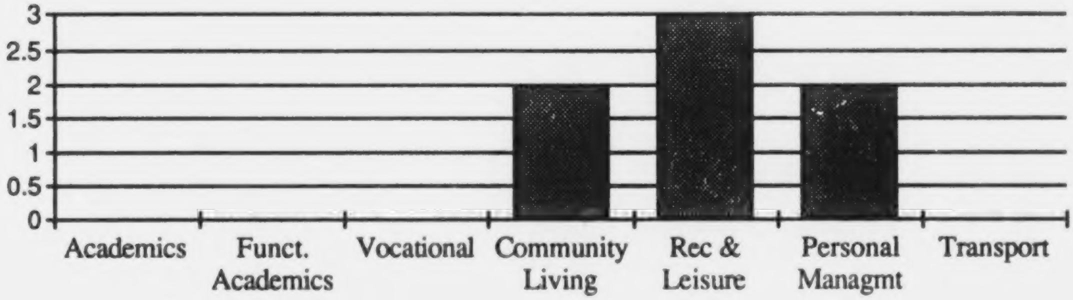

Figure 7e: Curriculum areas studied by youth with multiple disabilities (N=3)

Inter agency Planning

Inter agency planning, that is some form of cooperative planning to coordinate students transition from the school to post school agencies or organisations was an important feature of the transition initiative. Data showed that such cooperative planning had occurred and been documented for thirty five of the ninety eight students (35·7%) at this stage of the project. Such planning had been documented for twenty two of the fifty seven individuals interviewed (38·6%). The majority of these cases (18/22) concerned youth with mild intellectual disabilities, three involved youths with moderate intellectual disabilities, and one concerned a youth with physical disabilities.

Vocational Training Initiatives

Specific vocational service options initiated and supported under the Transition Project had involved a total of seventy one students (72·5%). Most of these services were occupational courses provided by the TAFE system. Some involved mainstream courses, but the majority were courses specially designed for students with disabilities. Fourteen students had been involved with job coaches, and one student had received vocational training in an enclave (see Table 10).

Slightly higher proportions were obtained for the students sampled, with seventy nine percent having been involved in a vocational training initiative under the transition project. Thirty four students (60%) had attended occupational courses at TAFE Colleges, ten (17·5%) had been involved with job coaches and one had attended an enclave (See Table 10 for details).

Table 10: Number of former students involved in vocational training transition initiatives

Transition Service Initiatives	Population leaving school 1989 -1990		Sample Interviewed 1992	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
TAFE Mainstream Course	4	4·1	3	5·3
TAFE Modified Mainstream	4	4·1	1	1·8
TAFE Special Course	48	49·0	30	52·6
Job Coach	14	14·3	10	17·5
Enclave	1	1·0	1	1·8
Total	71	72·5	45	79·0

Guidelines for these new Transition Services were still being trialed, and in these early days a number of students with moderate intellectual disability accessed both TAFE run courses and job coaching. As numbers of students seeking access to these services increased, and objectives for the job coaching program were tightened to include only award wage employment, the numbers in this disability group decreased.

Amount of Community Based Instruction

One of the features of special class or special school placement was the possibility of community based training provisions. This included not only vocational training options but also independent living and travel training. Data revealed that seventy six of the former students in the transition project population (77%) had been involved in some form of community based instruction, and forty eight of the sample (84%) had been involved in community based instruction (see Figure 8).

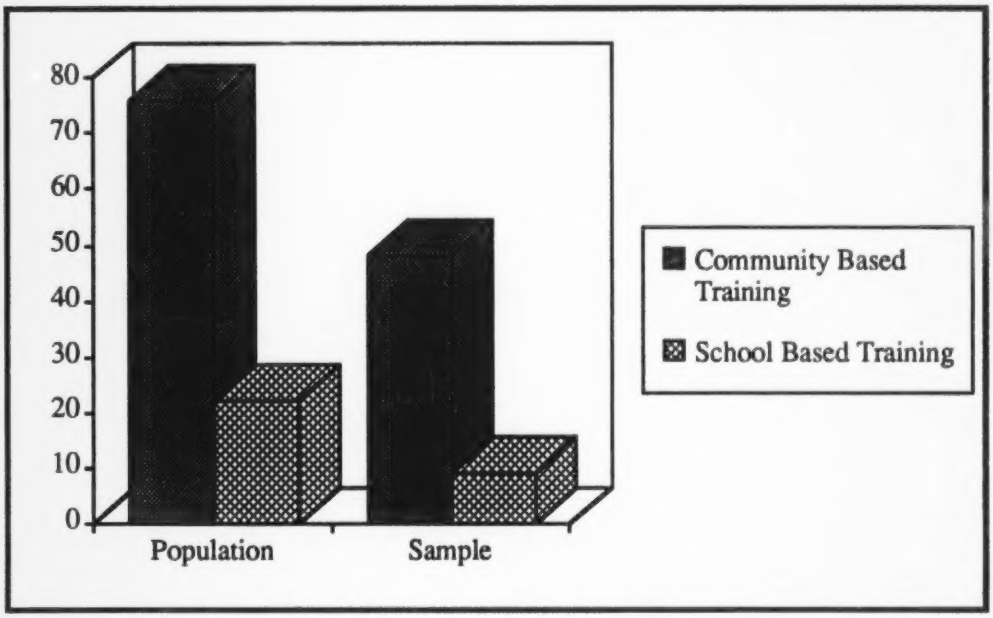

Figure 8: Numbers of former students involved in community based or school based instruction for population and sample interviewed

FOLLOW UP RESULTS OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES SURVEYED

Living arrangements

Of the fifty seven former students in the follow up, forty eight (84·2%) were living at home with parents and other family members, and nine (15·8%) were living in group homes assisted by a part time or full time worker. Those living in group homes had higher support needs. ($X^2 = 23 \cdot 89$, df = 4, p = ·000). Three of these youths had moderate intellectual disabilities, three had severe intellectual disabilities and three had multiple disabilities. All individuals with mild intellectual disabilities and physical disabilities were living at home with parents or family (see Table 11). No youth with disabilities surveyed were living alone or flatting with others.

Table 11: Living arrangements of former students

Living Arrangements	Frequency	Percent
BY SELF	0	0
WITH FRIEND(S)	0	0
WITH SPOUSE OR CHILDREN	0	0
WITH PARENTS OR OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS	48	84·2
WITH FOSTER PARENTS	0	0
WITH HOUSEMATES WHO ARE NOT RELATIVES OR FORMER FRIENDS	9	15·8
TOTAL	57	100·0

Only four individuals were actively looking for a different place to live. These were all youths with moderate or severe intellectual disabilities. One has been wait listed.

Living Expenses

Few individuals were paying all their own living expenses, although most were contributing to some extent. Nine individuals (15·8%) were not paying for their expenses (see Table 12). There was no difference according to disability type or level on this variable (p= ·51).

Table 12: Portion of living expenses paid by former students

Portion of Living Expenses Paid	Frequency	Percent	Cum %
ALL (Rent, Doctor Bills, Insurance, Food, Travel etc)	5	8·8	8·8
SOME	41	71·9	80·7
NONE	9	15·8	96·5
DON'T KNOW	2	3·5	100·0

Recreation, Leisure and Social Support

Participation in social and recreational activities was investigated as one measure of quality of life. Individuals were asked if they had participated in various activities over the past month. Various types of activities were represented. Generally the results indicated that family type outings such as picnics, barbecue, and going to the beach were the most common activities engaged. Ninety two percent of the sample had participated in at least one of these activities over the past month.

The next most frequently nominated activity was eating out in a restaurant. No distinction was made in the survey between fast food outlets and other restaurants. Seventy seven percent of the sample indicated they had eaten out over the past month.

Other activities engaged in by over fifty percent of the sample involved going for walks or riding a bike (68%), going out to a movie or show (60%) and attending a social club or social group (58%). Least engaged in activities were sports, hobbies and working out at the gym. (See Figure 9 for total responses).

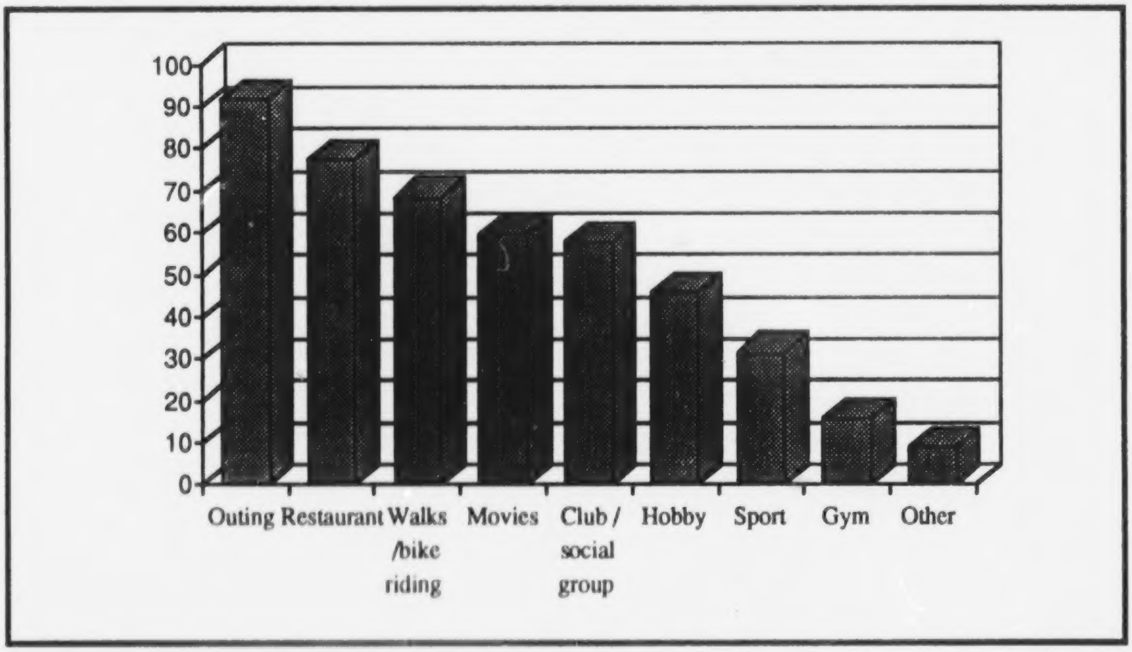

Figure 9: Percentage of sample participating in various social and recreational activities over the past month

Several independent variables were related to participation in various recreation and leisure activities. Attendance at outings such as picnics and barbecues appeared related to gender, with males attending these outings more frequently than females ($X^2 = 4{\cdot}9$, df = 1, p= ·03).

More youth with disabilities who came from non English speaking backgrounds used a gymnasium than youth from Aboriginal or English speaking backgrounds. Over seventy percent of the youth from non English speaking backgrounds had attended a gymnasium in the month surveyed, compared with sixteen percent for the total sample (X^2 = 19 ·3, df = 2, p= ·000).

Some differences in recreation patterns were evident across disability groupings (see Table 13). Most individuals with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities participated in walking in the park or bike riding for leisure, while significantly less individuals with physical or mild intellectual disabilities walked or rode for recreational reasons (X^2 = 13·6, df = 4, p = ·008).

Social groups or clubs were more frequently attended by individuals with severe (88%) and moderate (68%) intellectual disabilities and multiple disabilities (67%). Half the group with mild intellectual disabilities had attended some type of group or social club over the past month (50%), whereas none of the youths with physical disabilities (0%) had attended social groups or clubs in the past month. (X^2 = 12·35, df = 4, p = ·01). (See Table 13).

Table 13: Types of activities engaged in by disability groups (N=57)

Type of Activity	Mild Intellect	Mod Intellect	Severe Intellect	Physical	Multiple Disabilities	Total	Percent
Picnic/Bar-b-q	16	18	8	6	3	52	91·2
Restaurant	13	15	8	4	3	44	77·2
Walks/bike.	12	16	7	1	3	30	68·4
Movie	10	14	5	2	2	34	59·6
Social Group	10	13	7	0	2	33	57·9
Hobby	10	10	2	4	0	26	45·5
Sport	7	9	1	1	0	18	31·6
Work out -Gym	1	5	2	1	0	9	15·8
Total number in Disability Grouping	20	19	8	6	3	57	100·0

Free time appeared to be spent most often with family members, sometimes with friends and sometimes alone. More males spent free time alone than did females ($X^2 = 4{\cdot}04$, df = 1, p = ·03). There was no significant difference according to disability type in who free time had been spent with during the past month (see Table 14).

Table 14: Free time

Activity	Frequency*	Percent
BY SELF	11	19.3
WITH FRIENDS	25	43.9
WITH A FAMILY MEMBER	38	66.7

* Multiple responses accepted

Transport

Method of travelling around did vary according to disability type and level. Nearly half the sample (47·3%) travelled independently, especially those with mild intellectual disabilities. Two of the youths with disabilities reported they drove a car or motorbike (3·5%), several walked or rode a bicycle (10·5%) and many used public transport (33·3%). A number indicated they travelled with family members or friends using private transport (35·1). Ten individuals (17·5%) used specialised transport. This group consisted of all multiply disabled individuals, as well as those with severe and moderate disabilities and physical disabilities ($X^2 = 36{\cdot}73$, df = 12, p = ·000) (See Table 15).

Table 15: Method of transport

Travel Method	Frequency	Percent	Cum. Percent
DRIVE A CAR OR MOTORBIKE	2	3·5	3·5
WALK OR RIDE A BICYCLE	6	10·5	14·0
USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT (BUS, TRAIN)	19	33·3	47·4
TAKE A TAXI	1	1·8	49·1
GET A RIDE FROM FAMILY MEMBERS OR FRIENDS	20	35·1	84·2
RIDE IN A SPECIAL BUS OR VAN	9	15·8	100·0

Type of Post School Assistance Desired

Former students were asked if they required further assistance in particular areas now they had left school. Only one former student indicated further assistance was not required. By far the most frequently nominated form of assistance required related to recreation and leisure activities. As many as seventy seven percent of the sample nominated recreation and leisure as an area in which further assistance was desired. This was consistent across all disability groupings. Other services nominated by over thirty percent of the sample included Job Training and Transport (33%), Housing and Money Management (31%). (See Figure 10).

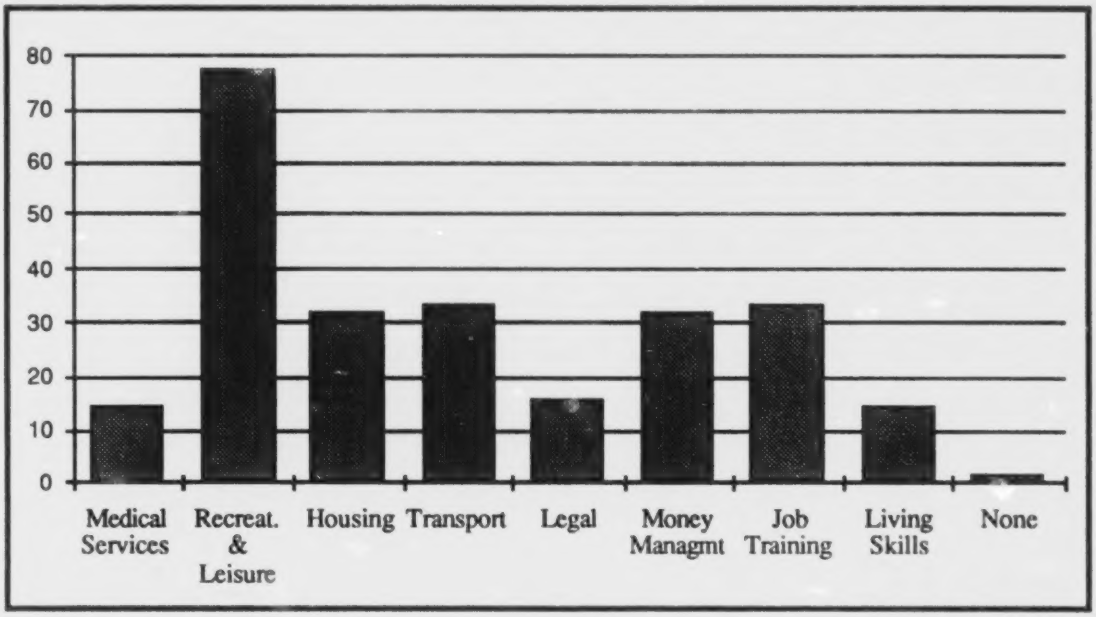

Figure 10: Percentage of youth with disabilities requiring various types of assistance post school

Apart from the recreation and leisure area, different requirements were noted according to disability type and degree. Individuals with mild intellectual disabilities more frequently requested assistance with housing than any other disability group ($X^2 = 9{\cdot}46$, df = 4, p = ·05). No youths with disabilities from non English speaking backgrounds requested assistance in the housing area however, while thirty six percent of youth with disabilities from English speaking backgrounds did request such assistance.

Assistance with job training was more commonly requested by youth with intellectual disabilities, regardless of level. Individuals with moderate intellectual disabilities and physical disabilities more frequently nominated the area of money management as one in which they required assistance ($X^2 = 12{\cdot}95$, df = 4, p = ·01). (See Table 16).

Table 16: Type of service assistance desired by disability type

Service Assistance Desired	Mild Intellect	Mod Intellect	Severe Intellect	Physical	Multiple	Unknown	Total	Percent %
Medical	3	4	-	-	-	1	8	14·0
Recreation	15	15	6	5	3	-	44	77·2
Housing	11	4	3	-	-	-	18	31·6
Transport	5	6	2	4	1	1	19	33·3
Legal	3	4	0	1	0	1	9	15·8
Money Mangmt	3	10	1	4	0	0	18	31·6
Job Training	9	6	4	0	0	0	19	33·3
Home living skill	2	2	1	1	2	0	8	14·0
No Assistance	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1·8

Voting

Twelve of the youth with disabilities had registered to vote (21%). This low figure was not surprising, given that the mean age of the group at time of leaving school was seventeen years four months, which is under the legal voting age of eighteen years. (See Table 17).

Table 17: Number registered to vote

Registered to Vote	Frequency	Percent
YES	12	21·1
NO	45	78·9
TOTAL	57	100·0

Income Support

A very high proportion of the sample were in receipt of social security support, that is a pension/disability support allowance, sickness or unemployment benefits (see Table 18). All individuals with physical, multiple and severe intellectual disabilities were in receipt of benefits, including sixteen of the nineteen moderately intellectually disabled individuals. Eight of the twenty one individuals with a mild intellectual disability (38%) were receiving benefits, but thirteen (62%) were not. The difference in income support according to disability type and level was highly significant ($X^2 = 20{\cdot}70$, df = 8, $p = {\cdot}008$).

Table 18: Number of youth in receipt of social security support

Disability Type and Level	In Receipt of Support		Not Receiving Support	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Mild Intellectual Disability	8/21	14.0	13	22.8
Moderate Intellectual Disability	16/19	28.1	3	5.3
Severe Intellectual Disability	8/8	14.0	-	-
Physical Disability	6/6	10.5	-	-
Multiple Disabilities	3/3	5·3	-	-
TOTAL	41/57	71.9	16	28.1

Employment Patterns

Overall thirty seven individuals or sixty five per cent of the sample reported they had at least one paid job since leaving school. These numbers include those in supported and sheltered employment. Nine youths had two jobs, and four youths had been in three or more jobs since leaving school (see Figure 11).

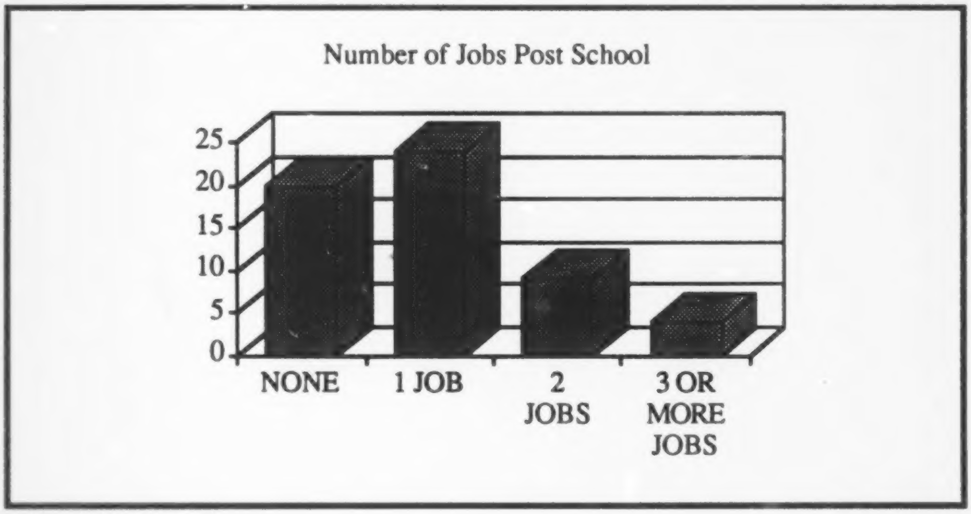

Figure 11: Number of youth with disabilities by number of jobs post school

Twenty individuals (35%) had not held any paid employment since leaving school. These were predominantly individuals with high support needs (ie. multiply disabled, N = 3/3; severely intellectually disabled, N = 6/8; physically disabled, N = 5/6). Six youths with mild intellectual disabilities had not held a job, but all youth with moderate intellectual disabilities had held at least one paid job since leaving school. Many of these were in either supported or sheltered employment. Success in gaining a job was significantly related to disability type and level ($X^2 = 32{\cdot}3$, df = 12, p = ·001). (See Table 19).

Table 19: Number of different paid jobs since leaving high school by disability

Number of Jobs Held	Mild Intell	Moderate Intell	Severe Intell	Physical	Multiple	Total
None	6	0	6	5	3	20 35·1%
One Job	7	14	2	1	0	24 42·1%
Two Jobs	6	3	0	0	0	9 15·8%
Three or more Jobs	2	2	0	0	0	4 7·0%
TOTAL	21 36·8%	19 33·3%	8 14·0%	6 10·5%	3 5·3%	57 100·0%

Manner of leaving school proved to be significantly related to employment outcomes. Thirty one of the thirty five youth (89%) who had been assisted to make the transition from school to another program or directly to employment had held at least one job since leaving school. In contrast, youth who had never held a job since leaving school included the two individuals who had graduated with a school certificate, all four individuals who had dropped out of school, and the majority (10/13) of those who had met the legal age limit and "aged out".
($X^2 = 34{\cdot}3$, df = 15, p = ·003).

Employment Rate At Time of Survey

Half the sample was found to be employed at the time of survey, but the nature and level of that employment was variable, since a number of youth were employed in supported and sheltered employment positions . Overall, thirty two percent of the sample were employed in award wage jobs, and nineteen percent were in sheltered employment settings. Forty nine percent were not employed at the time of survey. (See Figure 12).

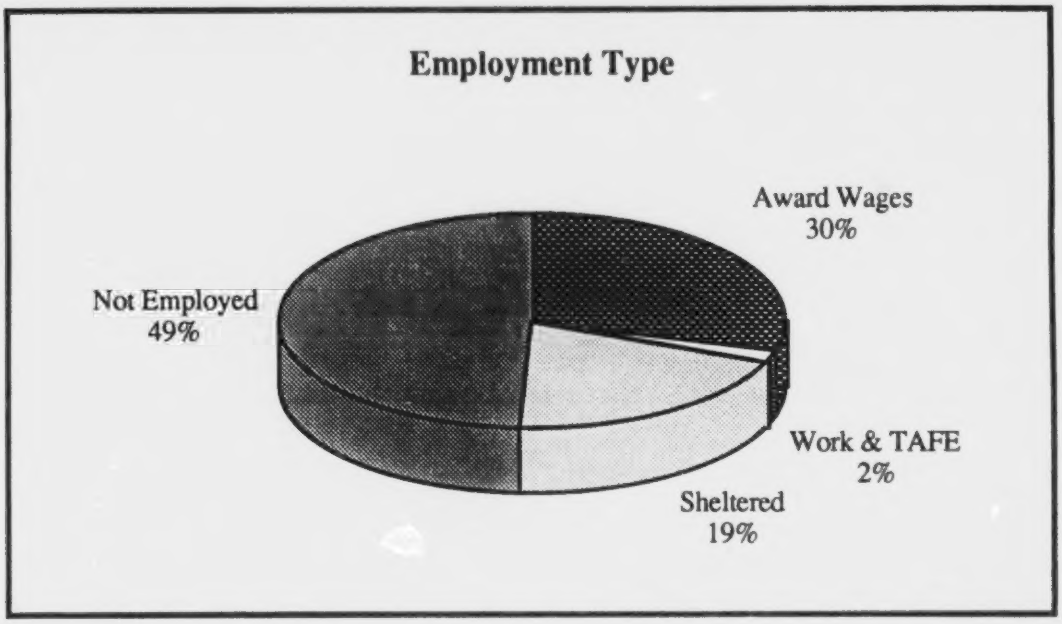

Figure 12: Employment type gained by youth with disabilities

Whether or not the individual was working was affected by type and degree of disability (X^2 = 25·79, df = 4, p = ·000). Slightly less than half of the those with a mild intellectual disability were working, but all jobs were in open employment positions (9/21 or 43%). All but one individual with moderate intellectual disabilities were working at the time of survey (18/19 or 95%). Eight were in open employment settings, and ten were in sheltered settings. Only one individual with a severe intellectual disability (1/8) was employed. This was in an open employment setting. One youth with a physical disability (1/6) was working in a sheltered setting. None of the three youth with multiple disabilities was employed (see Table 20).

Table 20: Employment type by disability

Employment Setting	Mild Intell	Moderate Intell	Severe Intell	Physical	Multiple	Total
WORKING AT AWARD WAGES	9	7	1	0	0	17 30%
WORKING & GOING TO TAFE	0	1	0	0	0	1 2%
SHELTERED WORKSHOP	0	10	0	1	0	11 19%
NOT EMPLOYED	12	1	7	5	3	28 49%
TOTAL	21 36.8%	19 33.3%	8 14.0%	6 10.5%	3 5.3%	57 100%

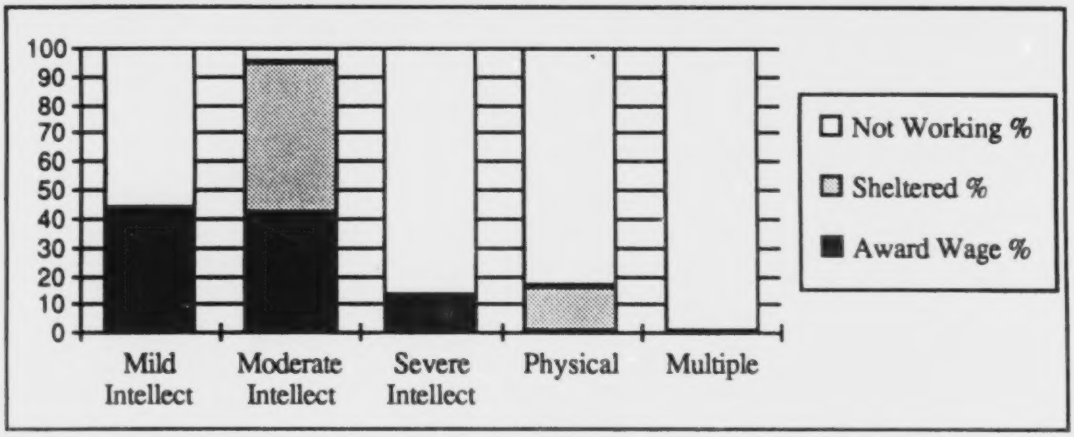

Figure 13: Employment status of youth surveyed by disability

Manner of leaving school was again significant ($X^2 = 19{\cdot}2$, df = 15, p = ·002). The majority of those employed (25/29) were youth with disabilities who had a planned transition from school to work or further training. Of the remaining four youths who were employed at the time of survey, three had aged out and the method of leaving school for the other was unknown.

Amongst those not employed at the time of survey were two who had graduated with school certificates (2/2), all those who had dropped out (4/4) and transferred out (2/2), and the majority of those who had aged out (10/13). In addition, ten youths who had a planned transition (10/35) were unemployed at the time of survey. Overall. the group who had a planned transition had significantly higher employment rates than those who left school without such assistance (see Figure 14).

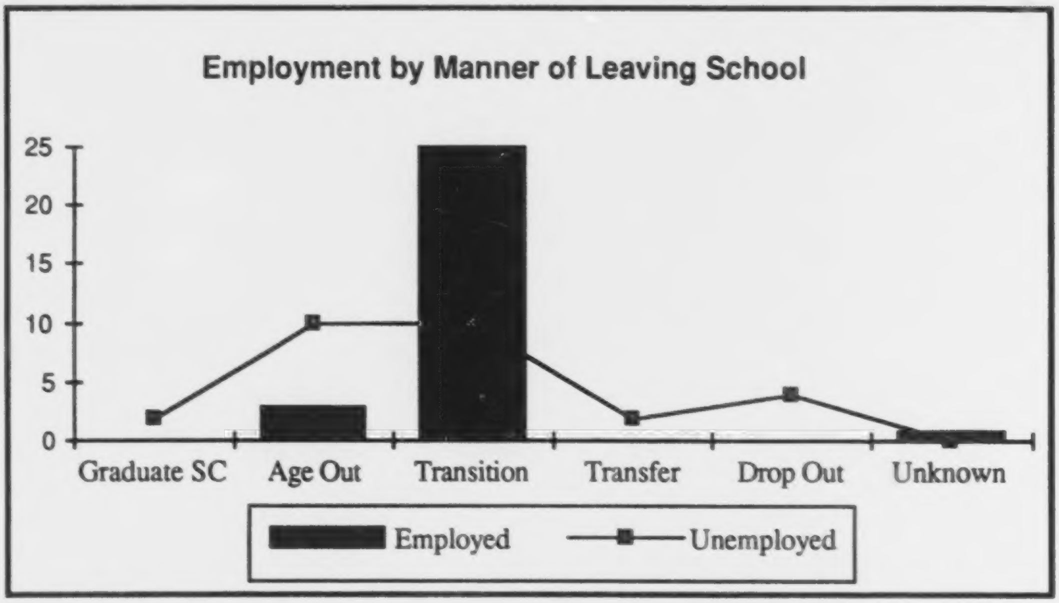

Figure 14: Employment status by manner of leaving school

61

Those currently in employment were asked the name of their present job. The diversity and types of responses given made it difficult to classify some of the jobs. Generally however jobs fell in the unskilled to semi skilled category, with a number being in service industries, process work and manufacturing. A list of job titles given has been presented in Table 21.

Table 21: Job titles

Job Title	Mild Intell	Mod Intell	Severe	Physical
Contract Cleaner	1	1		
Cutter	1			
Fast Food-Macdonald's		2		
French Polisher	1			
Glass maker	1			
Handyman		1		
Junior Sales	1			
Kitchen hand	1	2		
Machine operator		1		
Nursery		1		
Odd Jobs		1		
Packer	1	4		1
Painting		1		
Process	1	2		
Shredding			1	
Special		1		
Trainee	1			
Workshop		1		
Total	9	18	1	1

Sixteen individuals (28%) were working over thirty hours per week, and another eight (14%) were working over twenty one hours per week. Thus forty two percent of those surveyed were gainfully employed for over twenty one hours per week. Five of the jobs involved less than twenty hours per week, three involved less than ten hours per week (See Table 22).

Table 22: Number of hours worked per week

No of Hours Worked per Week	Frequency	Percent
NIL	28	49·1
LESS THAN 10 HOURS	3	5·3
10 TO 20	2	3·5
21 TO 30	8	14·0
31 TO 40	16	28·1
TOTAL	57	100·0

Not surprisingly, the level of income earned was low. Eighteen individuals (31·6%) earned less than $96 per week or $5000 per year. This included the majority of those with moderate intellectual disabilities (16/18), one youth with a mild intellectual disability, one with a severe intellectual disability and one with a physical disability. Nine individuals were earning between $97 to $300 per week or $3000 to $16,000 per year. Two were individuals with moderate intellectual disabilities and seven were youths with mild intellectual disabilities. The income of one individual was unknown. The difference in income according to disability was significant (X^2 = 15·8, df = 3, p = ·001). (See Table 23).

Table 23: Income levels gained by youth with disabilities in employment (N=29)

Gross Earnings	Frequency	Percent
ZERO (NO WAGES)	1	3·4
LESS THAN $58.00 PER WEEK (less than 3000 per year)	17	58·6
$58.00 TO $96.00 PER WEEK ($3001 to $5000 per year)	1	3·4
$97.00 TO $154.00 PER WEEK ($5001 to $8000 per year)	3	10·3
$155 TO $230.00 PER WEEK ($8001 to $12,000 per year)	5	17·2
$231 TO $308 PER WEEK ($12,001 to $16,000 per year)	1	3·4
$309 TO $385 PER WEEK ($16001 to $20,000 per year)	0	0
$386 TO $481 PER WEEK ($20001 to $25,000 per year)	0	0
MORE than $482 PER WEEK (more than 25,000 per year)	0	0
TOTAL	28*	96·6*

* Data for one individual missing

Six individuals reported they had received an increase in pay since commencing work (10.5%), several had received extra bonuses (3.5%), and several had been promoted to a more important job. These promotions were shared equally by youth with mild and moderated intellectual disabilities (see Table 24).

Table 24: Increases and promotions experienced at work

Increases/ Promotions	Mild Intell	Mod Intell	Total
INCREASES IN PAY	3	3	6 10·5%
EXTRA MONEY (BONUSES)	1	1	2 3·5%
PUT IN CHARGE OF OTHER WORKERS	-	-	- -
GIVEN MORE IMPORTANT JOBS	1	1	2 3·5%
TOTAL	5	5	10 17·5%

Length of Time Employed

Length of time in the job ranged from less than six months to over twenty four months. Seven individuals had been employed for less than six months, twelve had been in their current job for between six to twelve months. Ten youths had been employed in their current job for over twelve months , three of them for just over two years at the time of survey (See Figure 15).

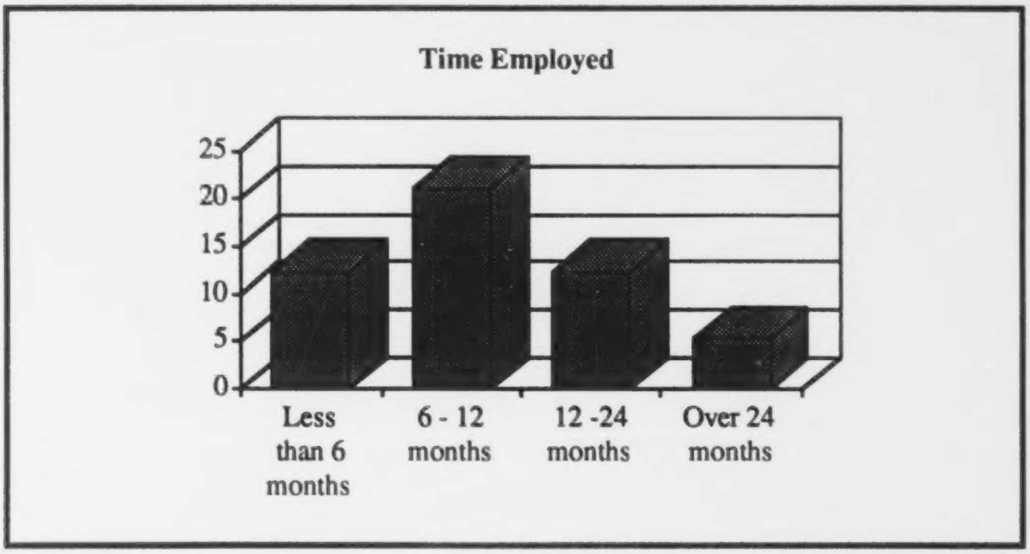

Figure 15: Percentage of sample by time employed in current job

While a number of individuals had been employed in their current job for the majority of their time out of school, some job changes had occurred. Length of time in the job according to disability groups is presented in Table 25.

Table 25: Length of time working in current job by disability (N=29)

Time In Current Job	Mild Intell.	Moderate Intell	Severe Intell	Physical	Total
LESS THAN 6 MONTHS	4	2	0	1	7 24·1%
6 MONTHS UP TO 1 YEAR	3	9	0	0	12 41·4%
BETWEEN 1 TO 2 YEARS	1	5	1	0	7 24·1%
OVER 2 YEARS	1	2	0	0	3 10·4%
TOTAL	9 31·1%	18 62·1%	1 3·4%	1 3·4%	29 100·0%

Method of Finding the Job

Most youth with disabilities who were employed had been assisted to find their current job. Four individuals (13·8%) had found their jobs independently. Parents or family members had assisted another five youth (17·2%) to gain employment. School personnel proved to be the most significant group in assisting youth with disabilities surveyed to make the transition into employment, with fifteen former students (51·8%) attributing their placements to teacher assistance. Community personnel had assisted another five (17·2%) (See Table 26).

Table 26: Method of finding job (N=29)

Method of Finding Job	Frequency	Percent
SELF	4	13·8
A FRIEND	0	0
A FAMILY MEMBER	5	17·2
SOMEONE FROM SCHOOL eg teacher/ Work Experience teacher /Job Coach	15	51·8
SOMEONE AT A COMMUNITY AGENCY eg. Job Placement Officer/ TAFE	5	17·2
TOTAL	29	100·0

65

Activity Patterns Among Those Not Employed

A number of former students who were not currently employed were looking for work, were studying or had some way of occupying time. Those looking for work or who were undertaking vocational training were predominantly youth with mild intellectual disabilities, although one individual with a severe intellectual disability was also seeking employment.

The only youth with a moderate intellectual disability who was not working was participating in a day program. Two youths who had physical disabilities were doing voluntary work or some other form of activity. Fifteen individuals (26·3% of the total sample) were at home not looking for work. These youth were predominantly those with high support needs, that is multiple disabilities (3/3), severe intellectual disabilities (5/6) and physical disabilities (3/5). These differences in activity when not employed according to disability type and level were highly significant (X^2 = 28·1, df = 8, p = ·000). (See Table 27 for details).

Manner of leaving school was also significantly related to the activity engaged in by those not currently employed (p = ·001). Of the ten youths who had been assisted to transition from school but who were not working, two were still undergoing employment training, one was in a day program, and five were actively looking for work. Only two of these individuals were at home not looking for work. Thus only two of the thirty five youth who left school with a planned transition were at home not anticipating entering employment of some sort.

In contrast those who were at home not seeking employment or some form of further training or activity comprised youths who had aged out of school (8/13), youths who had dropped out of school (3/4), two who had made the transition to another program, one who had transferred out, and one who had graduated with a school certificate.

Table 27: Activity while not employed by disability type (N=28)

Activity When Not Employed	Mild Intell	Moderate Intell	Severe Intell	Physical	Multiple	Total
Undertaking Employment Training	2	0	0	0	0	2 7·1%
Looking for employment	7	0	1	0	0	8 28·6%
Volunteer Work / Day Program	0	1	0	2	0	3 10·7%
Home - not looking for Work	3	0	6	3	3	15 53·6%
TOTAL	12 42·9%	1 3·6%	7 25·0%	5 17·%	3 10·%	28 100%

Nine of the individuals not employed were seeking assistance from some form of community agency in their search for employment (Table 28).

Table 28: Numbers Gaining Assistance in Seeking Employment (N=28)

Seeking Help for Job Training/Placement	Frequency	Percent
Yes	8	28·6
Yes, but on a waiting list	1	3·6
No	19	67·9
Total	28	100·0

Post Compulsory Education and Training

Twenty three of the fifty seven former students (40% of the sample) had considered enrolling in some form of post compulsory education and training facility. The types of courses contemplated were substantially those offered by TAFE, and involved school certificate and higher school certificate courses, occupationally oriented courses and apprenticeships. In addition five of the desired courses were ones offered by Evening Colleges. (See Table 29).

Those wishing to undertake further training were youth with mild and moderate intellectual disabilities. This was true for school certificate courses, TAFE trade courses, apprenticeships and evening college courses. Manner of leaving school was also significant in terms of whether youth were interested in doing further training. Only those youth who had been assisted to transition from school to adult life and those who had completed a school certificate were interested in further education and training ($X^2 = 19{\cdot}5$, df = 10, p = ·03).

Table 29: Numbers considered enrolling in post compulsory education and training

Considered Enrolling	Frequency	Percent
No	34	59·6
Courses Equivalent To The School Certificate Or HSC At TAFE	7	12·3
A Vocational TAFE Course (Eg. Motor-*Mechanics, Data Processing , Food Prep And Others)*	16	28·1
An Apprenticeship *(On The Job Training In Industry + TAFE Study)*	7	12·3
Evening College	5	8·8
Private College (*Eg. Business Or Other College)*	0	0
University	0	0

Although as many as forty percent had thought about enrolling, only ten youths with disabilities (18% of the total sample) had enrolled in various programs. Nine individuals had started classes and six (11%) had completed their courses. Six courses were TAFE trade type courses, one was aimed at the school certificate and three were Evening College courses. (See Figure 16 and Table 30 for details).

It was not clear why so many individuals had not proceeded to enrol despite a wish to do so. However all those who enrolled and participated in some form of post compulsory education and training were youth whose manner of leaving school had been categorised as making the transition into further training or employment. This held true for apprenticeships, TAFE trade courses, school certificate courses and Evening College courses.

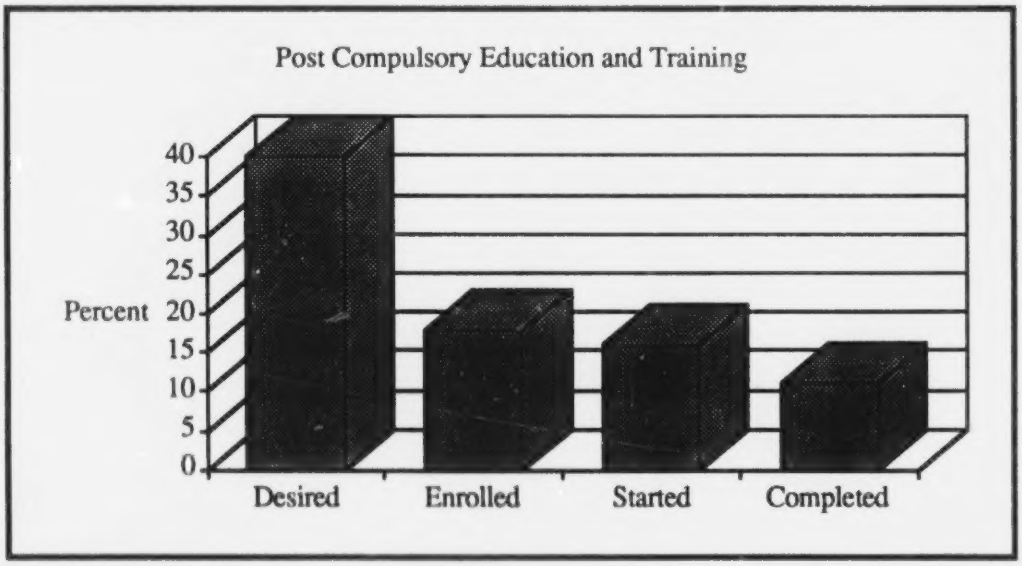

Figure 16: Post compulsory education and training rates for youth with disabilities

Table 30: Participation rates in post compulsory education and training for survey sample

Post Compulsory Education and Training Option	Applied		Started		Completed	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
School Course At TAFE	1	1·8	1	1·8	0	0
Trade Course At TAFE	6	10·5	5	8·8	4	7·0
Apprenticeship Program	0	0	0	0	0	0
Evening College	3	5·3	3	5·3	2	3·5
Private College	0	0	0	0	0	0
University	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	10	17·6	9	15·8	6	10·5

TAFE Courses were similar in nature to the type of TAFE courses chosen by students whilst still at school in the transition phase. These were occupationally oriented courses that concentrated upon the car and food industries (See Table 31). All youths who enrolled in these courses had mild intellectual disabilities.

Table 31: Types of post compulsory courses selected

Types Of Courses	Frequency	Percent
School Certificate Accreditation	1	1.8
Motor Mechanic	1	1·8
Car Detailing	1	1·8
Food Industry	3	5·3
Literacy	2	3·5
Leisure	1	1·8
Total	9	15·8

Evening College courses focussed on literacy and leisure areas. These were undertaken by one youth with a mild intellectual disability and two youths with moderate intellectual disabilities.

Seven of the students (12·3%) attended classes part time, and two students (3·5%) did so full time. Seven reported they had received help to enrol in the course, one from an employer, four from school personnel and one from a community worker. Seven of the students had also requested and received help during the course (See Table 32).

Table 32: Assistance with post compulsory education and training

Assisted To Choose & Enrol	Frequency	Percent
Self	2	3·5
A Friend	0	0
A Family Member	1	1·8
An Employer	1	1·8
Someone From School eg. A Teacher or Counsellor	4	7·0
Someone At A Community Agency	1	1·8
Total	9	15·8

Activities Post School

When employment, further education and training and other activities are all taken into account, many youth with mild to moderate disabilities who participated in the initial stages of the transition project and who have now been part of the adult community for one to two years, are actively involved in their community. Twenty nine of these youth (51%) are currently employed, another two (3·5%) are in full time training for employment, one (1·8%) is involved in a day program and two (3·5%) are performing voluntary or other non paid work. Eight youths (14%) currently unemployed are actively job seeking.

Another fifteen youth (26% of the sample), most of whom have multiple, severe intellectual or physical disabilities are at home and are not seeking employment (see Figure 17).

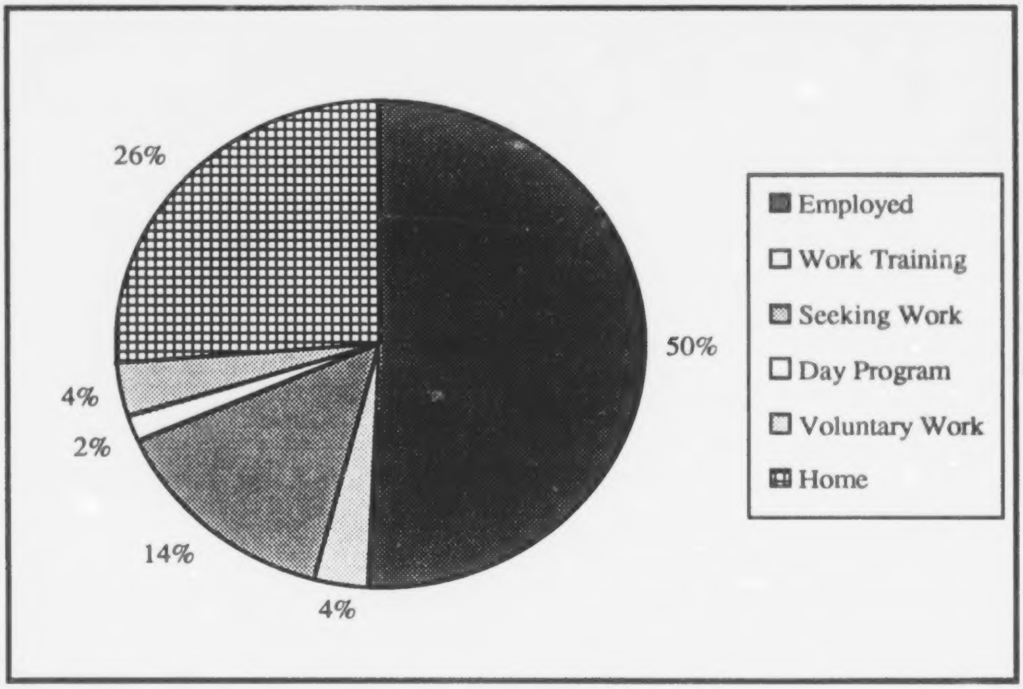

Figure 17: Activities of youth with disabilities post school

TAFE Courses during Transition and Post School Experiences

The patterns of employment and post compulsory education and training were investigated for those youth with disabilities who had participated in TAFE Courses and the job coach program whilst they were still at school. A total of thirty four youth with mild and moderate intellectual disabilities and physical disabilities had been involved in TAFE courses. Three (5·3%) had participated in mainstream TAFE courses, one (1·8%) completed a modified mainstream TAFE course and thirty (52·6%) participated in specially designed TAFE courses for youth with disabilities (See Table 33 for details).

Of this group, twenty four (71%) had at least one paid job since leaving school and one was engaged in full time training for work. At the time of survey, eighteen of these young people (53%) were employed, another two (5·9%) were continuing in full time work training, one (2·9%) was in a day program, and two were involved in voluntary or other work (5·9%). Thus a total of twenty three youth (68%) who had been involved in TAFE Courses were gainfully occupied at the time of survey. Another five (15%) were actively seeking employment. Six (18%) were at home not seeking employment.

Of the ten former students who had received job coaching in a community employment site during their transition phase, seven (70%) were employed and three (30%) were currently unemployed. Nine of these young adults had held at least one paid job since leaving school.

Table 33: Outcomes for those participating in vocational training service initiatives (N=45)

Activity	TAFE Course N= 34	Job Coaching N=10	Total N=44
Employed at time of survey	18 53·0%	7 70·0%	25 56·8%
Undertaking Employment Training	2 5·9%	-	2 4·5%
Looking for employment	5 14·7%	3 30·0%	8 18·2%
Volunteer Work	2 5·9%	-	2 4·5%
Day Program	1 2·9%	-	1 2·3%
Home - not looking for Work	6 17·6%	-	6 13·6%
Total	34 100·0%	10 100·0%	44 100%

Involvement in post compulsory education and training was only found among those who had previous experience with TAFE. One young person was enrolled in a School Certificate program and six had enrolled in TAFE Trade courses post school. Five had started trade courses and four had completed them at the time of survey. These occupationally oriented courses were in the areas of car detailing, motor mechanics and food preparation and service. Two were studying full time and four part time.

DISCUSSION

Youth with disabilities were surveyed who had been out of school for one to two years. This follow along was intended as only the beginning in a series of follow along studies designed to examine the transition experiences of youth with disabilities in NSW who were moving from school to adulthood. These preliminary findings are important in identifying current patterns and issues in transition, and in guiding schools, communities and policy makers in the critical elements of transition and the best practices to be incorporated into future planning and programming.

The first and most obvious concern was the high attrition rate experienced among those with mild and to a lesser extent, moderate intellectual disabilities. The time at which the survey was conducted may well have had an influence, as some families may have been out of contact as they had taken extended holidays over the Christmas and January period. Also some of the youth that could not be contacted may well be living independently, and hence they may have merged successfully into the adult community, and need no further assistance. The loss of so many from the mild and moderate intellectual disability groups however raises many questions about the representativeness of the data gathered, and the success or otherwise of those young people that could not be contacted.

Those with mild intellectual disabilities do represent a substantial number of people with disabilities. Edgar (1988) cautioned about the dangers of assuming this is an homogenous group, since great disparity exists within this population. He did however register several characteristics that are particularly notable, namely, the over representation of students from the working class, from the poor and from minority groups. Males are also over represented in this population (Edgar, 1988).

The large number of families that had moved, and had left no forwarding address, both in urban and rural locations, is suggestive of families in the lower socioeconomic band who rent properties rather than own them and who are therefore more able to move about as employment patterns shift. A number of families had moved interstate, particularly to Queensland, possibly in search of jobs and lower cost housing. After all, the time during which these youth had been out of school was marked by high unemployment and recession. On the other hand, this result may be indicative of a "transience" predicted by Toffler as an emerging feature of post industrial society (Toffler, 1972).

The sample that was located consequently included a greater representation of those with high support needs than the population from which the sample came. This included youth with multiple disabilities, severe intellectual disabilities and physical disabilities.

These groups were more geographically stable and so more readily contactable. Nevertheless, youth with mild and moderate intellectual disabilities still constituted the bulk of the sample surveyed.

It should also be noted that the group that were followed up were those involved in the very first stages of the pilot NSW Transition Project. These youth came from schools designated by their regions for inclusion in the project, and concentrated upon youth in special schools and special class placements. This group is not representative of the total population of youth with disabilities, particularly sensory and physical disabilities. No youth with sensory disabilities was represented in the sample surveyed.

Transition procedures and services were still in the early stages of development when these students were involved. Few staff had been adequately trained in the philosophy or procedures, while the individual transition planning system itself was still being established in the schools concerned. Many of these youth did not receive comprehensive transition planning, and additional transition services such as TAFE courses were being developed. Nevertheless there was a great deal of enthusiasm and a conviction that something was occurring that would make a difference and give hope for the future.

Curriculum Issues

Examination of the curriculum areas followed by these former students with disabilities in their last year of schooling revealed clear trends. There was a heavy emphasis noted in vocational curriculum, leisure and recreation, community living and functional academics, while very few youth had followed mainstream academic curriculum subjects.

Curriculum choices made within the individual transition planning process were to reflect the needs, preferences and interests of the students, as agreed by the individual planning teams. The curriculum choices and weighting found must therefore reflect the choices made under the transition planning system for this sample. In some ways the transition project has highlighted the tension between the inclusion and the segregation camps. The transition planning process was designed to accommodate both positions, as individual planning teams have to examine cooperatively the strengths, interests and needs of each student with a disability and then choose the most appropriate and desirable curriculum path for each student.

Many advocates of inclusion into regular education have argued on the grounds of normalization and social integration, while others support inclusion because they see the need for youth with disabilities to gain the same accreditation as their nondisabled peers. Accreditation has certainly been an issue for students, parents and teachers involved in transition, and is an issue deserving special attention.

Unfortunately very few integrated students who followed a mainstream curriculum were involved in the first stages of the Transition Project. Consequently little data are available for this group, and the smallness of the sample size surveyed was too small to permit generalisation.

Advocates of special classes and special schools have generally focussed attention upon the inappropriateness of the regular academic curriculum for many students with disabilities. Although they desire formal accreditation for students with disabilities, they have argued for the types of curriculum choices that focus on vocational and life skills, and have attempted to provide skill training in appropriate, nonsegregated community environments.

The curriculum options followed by the youth with disabilities surveyed fell predominantly into this category. Much of their final year of schooling was spent in community based training, concentrating upon vocational skills, community living skills, recreation and leisure skills and travel training.

Involvement in the Transition Project may partly explain the prominence of vocational training and employment in the school curriculum, as new service initiatives involving TAFE courses and job coaching were introduced through the project. However many schools had been providing a vocationally oriented curriculum for some time, through work experience programs and locally initiated TAFE courses. The curriculum patterns followed by these former students may therefore be representative of many special school and special class programs in NSW, whether or not they were involved in the Transition Project.

Employment Patterns

In line with high community unemployment, especially youth unemployment over the past few years, half the sample was found to be employed at the time of survey. Thirty seven individuals or sixty five per cent of the sample reported they had at least one paid job since leaving school. A large number of these jobs were in sheltered or supported employment, and wages were poor. However it must be remembered that over sixty percent of this group constituted youth with medium to high support needs. Such results compare favourably with other follow up/along studies, despite the harder economic times and the nature of the population.

Information gained from the Australian Bureau of Statistics disclosed high general youth unemployment trends. In January, 1992, the NSW youth unemployment rate for 15 to 19 year olds had reached 29.4 per cent. Data relating specifically to people with disabilities was unavailable (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1992).

Not only was there high youth unemployment, structural unemployment now exists. Whole categories of jobs previously available have disappeared. There has also been a dramatic shift in the types of job vacancies available in recent years, as jobs and opportunities in particular sectors, such as manufacturing, have declined.

Such trends raise many questions about the role of full time work for youth of the future, and highlight the need to train young people generally to be flexible, to adapt to change and to develop skills in new areas. The rate of change means that school programs can no longer afford to set a program in motion without also setting in motion a regular review process, not merely of its own program, but of the structural changes and trends taking place in employment.

Factors Affecting Outcomes

A number of significant differences in employment patterns and participation rates in post compulsory education and training were found that related to type and level of disability, involvement in occupationally oriented vocational training and manner of leaving school. Unlike American data, outcomes, at least in this study, did not appear to be influenced by gender, nor by location.

Disability

Type and level of disability significantly affected outcomes. Nine of the youths who had a mild intellectual disability (9/21 or 43%) were employed at the time of survey and two were still involved in employment training. Thus eleven of this group (52%) were fully employed or in training for employment at the time of survey. Another seven individuals (7/21 or 33%) were actively seeking employment. Many of these young adults had gained a job, but were between jobs at the time of survey. A number indicated they would like further assistance with job training. In all, three youths with mild intellectual disabilities were at home, having given up looking for work, and a total of eight of this group (8/21 or 38%) were in receipt of social security support at the time of survey. For those in employment, wages were generally low and opportunities for advancement limited. These figures and results are comparable with other studies.

As indicated, the patterns found among youth with moderate intellectual disabilities were particularly interesting. All of these individuals (100%) were involved in employment or another activity. Eighteen (95%) were employed at the time of survey, eight (42%) in award wage jobs and ten (53%) in sheltered employment settings. The other individual (5%) was involved in a day program. One of the youths working at award wages was, at the instigation of the employer, also attending an employment related part time TAFE course.

Although these results appear encouraging, wages were extremely low, and sixteen (84%) were in receipt of social security support at the time of survey.

Poorest employment outcomes were experienced by those with physical disabilities, severe intellectual disabilities and multiple disabilities. These findings are critical but not unexpected for those with severe and multiple disabilities. However the outcomes found among youths with physical disabilities are very disturbing. Not only were they not employed or continuing with any further education or training, the majority reported significant needs for assistance. These were in the areas of recreation and leisure (5/6), transport (4/6) and money management (4/6). While these results may be an artefact caused by the smallness of the sample size, the poor outcomes detected for this group in employment, post compulsory education and training and independent living require further investigation.

Only one individual with a severe intellectual disability was employed, yet half of this group requested job training assistance and desired some form of employment or productive day activity. None of the youths who had a multiple disability was involved in any productive activity.

Overall, youth with mild intellectual disabilities were more likely to be in full time, award wage employment or be actively looking for work than any other group. Seventy one percent of former students who had a mild intellectual disability had held at least one award wage job since leaving school, although only forty three per cent were employed at the time of survey. This result may confirm the seasonal nature of much of this employment, since the time of survey was the very time when many small companies close for an extended period, and a number of lay offs occur. Although former students with moderate intellectual disabilities had the highest employment rate, with ninety five per cent of this group employed, half of this employment was in supported or sheltered settings.

These results are positive in the sense that, given the prevailing economic difficulties of high unemployment and structural employment changes, a number of youth with disabilities had gained and maintained employment. Others were in the process of changing jobs, a process that Kiernan (1986), argued should not always be considered as failure, but in many cases as a sign of occupational growth and development. However the results also confirm earlier findings both in Australia and overseas regarding the low level and status of employment among young people with disabilities, low income levels and poor job security. The call by Parmenter (1986; 1992b) for a balanced but proactive approach to the issue of employment for youth with disabilities cannot go unheeded.

Occupationally Oriented Vocational Training

Youth with mild and moderate intellectual disabilities who undertook occupationally oriented vocational courses had higher employment rates and higher participation rates in post compulsory education and training than those who did not undertake such training.

This training was gained either through Transition sponsored TAFE courses and/or through job coaching services. This vocational training involved greater supervision and instruction than is generally available through school and community work experience programs.

These findings are similar to the results of the US National Longitudinal Transition Study that found participation in occupationally oriented courses while still at school and manner of leaving school critical variables influencing participation rates in post compulsory education and training (Wagner, 1991).

Manner of leaving school

Research has consistently found manner of leaving school to be a significant variable affecting post school outcomes, with best performances related to graduation and poorest outcomes related to aging out and dropping out.

Manner of leaving school was found to be a critical variable in this study, but was also related to type and level of disability. Better outcomes were attained by a large number of former students (61%) who had been assisted to transition from school to another placement post school, either some form of employment or post secondary education and training. Most of these students had a mild or moderate intellectual disability. Overall, they had higher participation rates in both employment and post secondary education and training than any other group. These youth had been assisted to make their transition from school to employment or further training by school personnel, community personnel and families.

A high level of involvement of school and community personnel as distinct from the self /family/ friend network appears to be an interesting outcome of the transition planning process. While individual special schools had previously assisted youth in transition (Wirth, 1979), the self/family/friend network had generally predominated. The increased role of school personnel, in particular, appears to be one indicator of a shift occasioned by the current transition project.

Poorest results in both employment and further education and training were found among individuals who had left school by dropping out, transferring out, or aging out. A number of youths (23%) from special schools had met the legal age limit and "aged out". Students who "aged out" were generally those with high support needs, who had nowhere to transition to post school, and who are now at home with no employment or day activity.

Very few students in this sample had graduated with formal accreditation (3.5%). Those who did so were all students with physical disabilities. Contrary to findings from other studies, these youths with physical disabilities who graduated were not employed or involved in any post compulsory education or training, although one was involved in voluntary work.

Post compulsory education and training

All youths who went on to enrol in school certificate or occupational training courses, post school, were those who had mild intellectual disabilities and who had left school by making the transition to employment or further training. The majority of these students had also participated in some type of TAFE course through the Transition Project whilst still at school. These youths appeared to be more independent, and to be able to solicit assistance as and when needed. A number had gained assistance with enrolment procedures, and had the skills and confidence to request and gain assistance during the operation of their courses.

Several youths with mild and moderate intellectual disabilities whose manner of leaving school was to "transition" also participated in Evening College courses post school. These courses were in literacy and leisure skills. Thus manner of leaving school was a significant factor in the post school education and training participation rates of youth with disabilities.

Youth with High Support Needs

Youths with physical disabilities, severe intellectual disabilities and multiple disabilities did not fare as well in either employment or post school education and training as those who had mild or moderate intellectual disabilities. All were in receipt of social security support. It appears from this limited data that youths with high support needs and transport and mobility challenges are still homebound. The majority were neither employed, nor engaged in any further training, daily occupation or avocational activity. Similar to their less disabled peers, they desired more recreation and leisure activities but required assistance in extending their leisure and recreation options.

The difficulties facing youth with high support needs in transition has been raised as an issue by parents, school personnel and Community Transition Teams throughout the state. As these results indicate, there are simply no post school options in urban or rural areas to which these young people can make a transition. There has been growing demand for an Independent Living Training service model, but few are in operation (Parmenter & Knox, 1989). Those few that are operating cater for a very small numbers of individuals and face numerous difficulties, not the least of which being high delivery costs (Parmenter, Briggs, Gray & Knox, 1990).

Parmenter et. al. (1990) advocated that a model service be established, but recommended that any new model must provide equal opportunities for males and females, allow resources for 1:1 staffing, provide incentives to attract and keep expert staff, be flexible enough to cater for an aging population, provide an administrative and transport base, enable services to be provided during normal working hours and be prepared to be actively involved in community education.

Several Community Transition Teams have identified this as a priority. They have gathered data and developed submissions for the establishment of such services in their communities. To date these have been met with little success. This leaves the majority of adults and youth with high support needs no option but to remain at home post school.

This situation in stark contrast to the evidence now available about the competitive employability of individuals with severe disabilities, given appropriate placement, training and support, through a supported work model (Bellamy, Rhodes & Albin, 1985; Wehman, Hill, Hill, Brooke, Pendleton & Britt, 1985; Wehman, Hill, Goodall, Cleveland, Brooke & Pentecost, 1982). The data in this study indicate that none of these youth with high support needs had access to such programs and corroborates Community Transition Team data concerning the lack of programs or activities available to people with high support needs in local communities. It also emphasises the fact that no matter how effective school and transition processes may be, if there are no programs or positions to which students can make a transition post school, then other efforts may well be in vain.

Independent Living

The outcomes in independent living noted amongst this sample were consistent with previous research findings. Most were living at home with parents or family, although a number of youths with high support needs were living in group homes. The majority of the sample were paying or contributing to their own living expenses, used public and/or private transport and participated to some degree in regular community life. Very few were registered to vote and the degree of community involvement was equivocal.

Participation rates in recreation and leisure activities varied, to some extent according to disability type, gender and ethnicity. The clearest trend however, was the desire expressed by the majority of youth surveyed (77%) for extra assistance and support in the recreation and leisure area. This was particularly striking, both for the numbers requesting such assistance, and because it was the only area of assistance on which all disability groups were unanimous. It highlights the continued importance of recreation and leisure in our society post school, and the needs of all people with disabilities in this area.

Although recreation and leisure had been chosen as a curriculum and instruction area for sixty seven percent of the students in their last year of school, the results indicate that these programs were either ineffective or insufficient for the need. Schools would be well advised to examine critically their curricula in this area. The establishment of community based links and liaison with post school recreation and leisure programs that focus on developing natural supports in the community is recommended.

Although some information was gathered concerning quality of life issues, no clear or reliable picture could be established. Many of the young adults surveyed had family and friendship networks, but the strength, importance and level of satisfaction gained from these were unknown. More detailed information was required to examine social networks and supports, decision making and satisfaction issues more carefully. The survey tool clearly warrants expansion in this area for future use.

The number and complexity of the variables involved confirms the importance of developing a sound theoretical model of quality of life, that could integrate the results into a more manageable and serviceable form. The identification of key factors in quality of life would enable follow up and follow along studies such as this to be more streamlined and cost effective, both in data collection and data analysis, while a clear analysis of real and desired outcomes is essential for the development and refinement of effective transition processes at all levels. Information is also required on the transition experiences and outcomes for youth with sensory and physical disabilities, as these were not adequately represented in this sample.

CONCLUSION

An interesting pattern of results is emerging regarding the post school outcomes of this first group of students with disabilities involved in the Transition Project. Care needs to be taken in generalising or extrapolating these results, since the sample size was small, length of time out of school was short and many of these students received only rudimentary aspects of the transition process.

Further tracking of these and additional students moving through the project is essential if a valid and reliable picture of the post school outcomes and quality of life of young adults with disabilities is to be gained, and if transition processes are to be evaluated, monitored and improved. More data sets are essential for determining the best, most efficient strategies, services and practices required to promote positive educational outcomes.

80

In spite of these restrictions, several variables relating to disability, the type of curriculum and instruction received at school and the manner of leaving school have already emerged as critical. These trends support research being conducted elsewhere, and ratify the importance of many aspects of the Transition process introduced into NSW schools for students with disabilities.

Differing patterns noted among the disability groups highlight the importance of tailoring services to meet the peculiar needs of each group, and caution about assumptions that the needs and requirements of disability groups are the same. Many of the initiatives of the past few years, particularly with occupationally oriented vocational courses through TAFE and job coaching appear to be positively improving employment and post compulsory education and training rates for youth with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities. Little appears to have changed however for youth with severe and multiple disabilities, while the situation for youth with physical and sensory disabilities needs further investigation.

The outcomes represented by this first group of special education students who were involved in the NSW Transition Project indicate that there is still a long way to go in fostering successful adult adjustment and quality of life for young people with disabilities.

Some of the greatest challenges lie ahead if the transition process as articulated in the NSW model is to fulfil its promise of providing clearer and more cohesive pathways with positive outcomes for all students with disabilities as they move from school to the post school world.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the analyses of the data collected , several recommendations are made. These recommendations are that:

1. A refined tracking system that includes more quality of life data be implemented on a regular basis to evaluate the effectiveness of the transition process and its outcomes for students with disabilities, and this data be accessible to regions, schools and communities for planning purposes.

2. The transition processes, post school adjustment and quality of life of students with sensory and physical disabilities be examined as a matter of urgency.

3. That the individual planning system continue as the driving mechanism in the transition process for all students with disabilities in transition. Any school wishing to improve students' transition from school to post school adjustment should introduce the individual planning system.

4. That staff in schools providing transition services to students with disabilities be adequately trained in the transition process. This training should include familiarisation with and understanding of the transition policy, procedures and guidelines (including the individual planning process) and the development of skills to implement the process competently for the specific disability group involved.

5. Occupationally oriented transition services such as TAFE courses and job coaching be available to students with disabilities in their final school years, and provided on a priority basis according to set criteria eg.
    - the student has an ITP developed by a team including the student
    - the application has sufficient information from the school identifying the course as an area of student interest, and
    - there is sufficient school assessment information re strengths and training needs

6. The current fee for service arrangements for TAFE Transition Courses be examined and a more equitable and workable system of service provision be negotiated as a matter of urgency between DSE and TAFE.

7. School transition teams encourage and assist students with disabilities in transition to establish firm links with generic and/or special post school recreation and leisure programs before they leave school.

8 School and community based recreation and leisure programs focus on developing natural supports for students with disabilities in the community

9. Alternative and valued functional curriculum options developed through the transition project and accredited by the Board of Studies be coordinated, and a resource pool be established for sharing these curricula.

10. Post school options for youth with high support needs be developed in both urban and rural communities, that take into account the special needs and requirements of this group.

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APPENDICES

Form A : Telephone Interview

Form B: Student Information Form

Telephone Survey

Begin here

1. First, I am interested in knowing how (you/___) might spend free time...During last month, (have you/ has ___) done any of the following *(Circle all that apply: for data entry, enter a 1 for responses circled, enter a 2 for responses not circled)*

1 gone for a walk e.g. in the park, bush...
1 worked out in a gym?
1 played some kind of sport
1 spent time on a hobby
1 been to a club or group activity
1 eaten out in a restaurant
1 gone on an outing - picnic, beach, bar-b-q
1 been to see a movie
1 other ______________________________

2. During the last month, (did you/did ___) spend this free time *(Circle all that apply: for data entry, enter a 1 for responses circled, enter a 2 for responses not circled):*

1 BY SELF
1 WITH FRIENDS
1 WITH A FAMILY MEMBER
1 NO

3. When (you/___) want(s) to go out somewhere, how (do you/does ___) usually get there? *(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):*

1 DRIVE A CAR OR MOTORBIKE
2 WALK OR RIDE A BICYCLE
3 USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT (BUS, TRAIN)
4 TAKE A TAXI
5 GET A RIDE FROM FAMILY MEMBERS OR FRIENDS
6 RIDE IN A SPECIAL BUS OR VAN
7 NONE OF THE ABOVE

4. If the following services were available, which would be of most interest to (you/__)? I am going to read through the list once. Then I will go thru them again one by one. Choose up to three. *(Circle up to three: for data entry, enter a 1 for responses circled, enter a 2 for responses not circled.):*

1 MEDICAL Services (DR, Dentist, physio)
1 RECREATION & LEISURE ACTIVITIES
1 HOUSING/A PLACE TO LIVE
1 TRANSPORT SERVICES
1 LEGAL HELP OR ADVICE
1 ASSISTANCE IN MANAGING MONEY
1 TRAINING FOR A JOB
1 TRAINING in HOME LIVING SKILLS
1 NONE OF THE ABOVE

5. Next, I would like to know if (you are/ __ is) registered to vote? *(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):*

1 YES
2 NO

6. The next few questions are about (your/ __) living arrangements.. Whom (are you/is __) living with currently? *(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):*

1 BY SELF
2 WITH FRIEND(S)
3 WITH SPOUSE OR CHILDREN
4 WITH PARENTS OR OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS
5 WITH FOSTER PARENTS
6 WITH HOUSEMATES WHO ARE NOT RELATIVES OR FORMER FRIENDS

7. (Are you/is __) currently living in a group home, assisted by a part time or full time worker? *(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):*

1 YES
2 NO *(circle NO if the answer to Q6 is 3,4, or 5)*

8. What part of (your/__) living expenses (do you/does__) pay? *(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):*

1 ALL (RENT, DOCTOR BILLS, INSURANCE, FOOD, TRAVEL ETC.)
2 SOME
3 NONE
4 DON'T KNOW

9. (Do you/does__) receive social security support? Pension/ sickness or UB *(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):*

1 YES
2 NO
3 DON'T KNOW

10. Is someone helping you /__ to find a different place to live? *(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):*

1 YES
2 YES, BUT ON A WAITING LIST
3 NO
4 DON'T KNOW

11. Now, I would like to ask some questions about work. How many different paid jobs (have you/ has __) had since leaving high school? *(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):*

1 NONE
2 1 JOB
3 2 JOBS
4 3 OR MORE JOBS

12. (Are you/is __) working now
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):
1 YES - *skip to question #16*
2 NO - *go to question #13*

13. If (you are/__is) not working now, (are you/is__)?
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):
1 GOING TO SCHOOL
2 STAYING AT HOME, LOOKING FOR PAID EMPLOYMENT
3 STAYING AT HOME, NOT LOOKING FOR PAID EMPLOYMENT
4 TRAINING FOR A JOB
5 PARTICIPATING IN A DAY PROGRAM
6 DOING VOLUNTEER WORK
7 NONE OF THE ABOVE
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

14. Is someone from a community agency helping (you/ __) with job training or job placement?
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):
1 YES
2 YES, BUT ON A WAITING LIST
3 NO
4 DON'T KNOW
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

15 If (you/ _ is) not working or studying, how (do you/ does ___) spend the daytime?

____

Skip to #23..

16. Who helped (you/__) most to find (your/__) this job?
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):
1 SELF
2 A FRIEND
3 A FAMILY MEMBER
4 SOMEONE FROM SCHOOL e.g.. A TEACHER/WORK EXPERIENCE TEACHER/JOB COACH..
5 SOMEONE AT A COMMUNITY AGENCY e.g. A JOB PLACEMENT OFFICER OR SOCIAL WORKER
6 NONE OF THE ABOVE
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

17. What is the name of (your/__) the job you are doing now? e.g. cashier
(write in space below or enter zero"0000" if this question is skipped):

_ _ _ _ ______________________________
(current job title)

18. Which one of the following best describes (your/__) job?
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):
1 WORKING AT A REGULAR JOB *(part or full time)*
2 WORKING IN THE ARMED SERVICES
3 WORKING AND GOING TO TAFE
4 WORKING WITH A JOB COACH
5 WORKING AT A SHELTERED WORKSHOP
5 PAID WORK AT SOME OTHER JOB SETTING
______________________*(Specify)*
6 UNPAID WORK IN FAMILY BUSINESS/ VOLUNTARY WORK
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

19. How many hours (do you/does__) work per week?
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):
1 LESS THAN 10 HOURS
2 10 TO 20
3 21 TO 30
4 31 TO 40
5 MORE THAN 40 HOURS
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

20. (Have you/has__) had any of the following happen because of your work?
(circle all that apply: for data entry, enter a 1 for responses circled, enter a 2 for responses not circled, enter a 0 for all responses if this question is skipped)
1 INCREASES IN PAY (MORE MONEY)
1 EXTRA MONEY (BONUSES)
1 PUT IN CHARGE OF OTHER WORKERS
1 GIVEN MORE IMPORTANT JOBS
1 NONE OF THE ABOVE
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

21. How much money (do you/does__) earn per week (gross pay, before tax, super & health insurance)?
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):
1 ZERO (NO WAGES)
2 LESS THAN $58.00 PER WEEK (less than 3000 per year)
3 $58.00 TO $96.00 PER WEEK ($3001 to $5000 per year)
4 $97.00 TO $154.00 PER WEEK ($5001 to $8000 per year)
5 $155 TO $230.00 PER WEEK ($8001 to $12,000 per year)
6 $231 TO $308 PER WEEK ($12,001 to $16,000 per year)
7 $309 TO $385 PER WEEK ($16001 to $20,000 per year)
8 $386 TO $481 PER WEEK ($20001 to $25,000 per year)
5 MORE THAN $482 PER WEEK (more than 25,000 per year
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

22 How long (have you/has__) been working at the job you now have?
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):

1 LESS THAN 6 MONTHS
2 6 MONTHS UP TO 1 YEAR
3 BETWEEN 1 TO 2 YEARS
4 OVER 2 YEARS
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

↓

23. How long is it since you left school?
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):

1 LESS THAN 6 MONTHS
2 6 MONTHS UP TO 1 YEAR
3 BETWEEN 1 TO 2 YEARS
4 OVER 2 YEARS

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24. Now, these last questions refer to (your/__) interest or experience in further training courses and education... (Have you/has __) thought about enrolling in any of the following programs. Tell me yes or no as I read each one.
(circle all that apply: for data entry, enter a 1 for responses circled, enter a 2 for responses not circled)

1 COURSES EQUIVALENT TO THE School Certificate OR HSC AT TAFE
1 A VOCATIONAL TAFE COURSE (e.g. motor-*mechanics, data processing , food prep and others)*
1 AN APPRENTICESHIP *(on the job training in industry + TAFE study)*
1 EVENING COLLEGE
1 PRIVATE COLLEGE *(e.g. Business or other College)*
1 UNIVERSITY *(a 4 year program)*
1 other ________________

1 NONE OF THE ABOVE *You are DONE! Read closing statement* ➜
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

25. (Have you/has __) applied to *(name each of the specific programs enrolled in)?*
(circle all that apply: for data entry, enter a 1 for responses circled, enter a 2 for responses not circled, enter a 0 for all responses if this question is skipped)

1 SCHOOL COURSE AT TAFE
1 TRADE COURSE AT TAFE
1 APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM
1 EVENING COLLEGE
1 PRIVATE COLLEGE
1 UNIVERSITY

1 NONE OF THE ABOVE *You are DONE! Read closing statement* ➜
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

25. (Have you/has __) started taking classes at the *(name each of the specific programs applied to)?*
(circle all that apply: for data entry, enter a 1 for responses circled, enter a 2 for responses not circled, enter a 0 for all responses if this question is skipped))

1 SCHOOL COURSE AT TAFE
1 TRADE COURSE AT TAFE
1 APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM
1 EVENING COLLEGE
1 PRIVATE COLLEGE
1 UNIVERSITY

1 NONE OF THE ABOVE *You are DONE! Read closing statement* ➜
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

26. (Have you /has __) completed the *(name each of the specific programs started)?*
(circle all that apply: for data entry, enter a 1 for responses circled, enter a 2 for responses not circled, enter a 0 for all responses if this question is skipped))

1 SCHOOL COURSE AT TAFE
1 TRADE COURSE AT TAFE
1 APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM
1 EVENING COLLEGE
1 PRIVATE COLLEGE
1 UNIVERSITY
1 NONE OF THE ABOVE ***Go on to question #27...***
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

Ask the remaining questions, IF the former student has:
started or completed any programs (i.e., responded "yes" - Q 25 and/or "yes or no" - Q 26

27. While attending the (name the specific programs) did (you/__) ask for special help, for example with tutoring, coaching, or getting to and from class?
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):
1 YES, AND RECEIVED HELP
2 YES, BUT DID NOT RECEIVE HELP
3 NO
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

Questions 28- 30 refer only to the most recent post-secondary program the former student has started or completed...

28. What type of training did (you/__) receive in *(name most recent program*), e.g. accounting, auto-mechanics, liberal arts or others?
(write in the space below or enter zero "00" if this question is skipped):

_ _ ______________________________
(type of training)

29. Did (you/__) attend classes part time or full time *(Name the most recent program)?*
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):
1 PART TIME
2 FULL TIME
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

30. Who helped (you/__) the most to choose and enrol in *(name most recent program)?*
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):
1 SELF
2 A FRIEND
3 A FAMILY MEMBER
4 AN EMPLOYER
5 SOMEONE FROM SCHOOL e.g. a teacher or counsellor
6 SOMEONE AT A COMMUNITY AGENCY e.g. a rehabilitation counsellor
7 NONE OF THE ABOVE
0 *(circle zero if this question is skipped)*

Read closing statement . . .

Closing Statement:

"Well, this completes our survey. Thank you again for helping us. Your answers will assist us in planning and evaluating the educational program at (school's / district's name). Have a nice (day/evening). Goodbye."

To be filled out by interviewer:

31. Who was the source of information for this survey?
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):
1 FORMER STUDENT
2 A FAMILY MEMBER
3 BOTH, FORMER STUDENT AND FAMILY MEMBER
4 SOME OTHER INFORMED PERSON

32. Method of data collection:
(circle one response: for data entry, enter the number circled):
1 TELEPHONE
2 MAIL
3 IN PERSON

FORM B

Student Information Form
CONFIDENTIAL

Directions: Answer questions 1 -12 for all students selected. Fill in the boxes or circle one code number.

1) SCHOOL CODE NUMBER:
— — — — —

2) SIZE OF COMMUNITY SCHOOL IS LOCATED
1 town - under 2,500
2 city - 2,500 - 49,950
3 suburb
4 large city - over 50,000

3) D.S.E. REGION
01 Metropolitan East
02 Metropolitan North
03 Metropolitan south west
04 Metropolitan West
05 Hunter
06 North Coast
07 North West
08 Riverina
09 South Coast
10 Western

4) CLASS BEING FOLLOWED UP:

Indicate number of years this class of students has been out of school

— — — — — —
(year of leaving) (number of years out)

5) Cluster/student code number:
— — — — — — — — — —

6) DATE OF BIRTH
— — — — — —
(month) (day) (year)

7) SEX
F female
M male

8) NATIONALITY:
1 Aboriginal/Torres St. Islander
2 Australian
3 Other

9) LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME:
1 English
Non English: (*write in space below*)
— — ____________________
(language spoken in home)

10) LEVEL OF PLACEMENT:

Use most recent level if changes have occurred over time

1 Regular class -full time (received spec ed. services in regular class)
2 Regular class - at least half time (received spec ed. services in regular class)
3 Special class- at least half time (received spec ed. services in self contained class)
4 Special class-full time (received spec ed. services in self contained class)
5 Special school placement

11) PRIMARY DISABILITY:

Use the primary disability, if more than one.

01 emotional/behavioural disorder
02 mild intellectual disability
03 moderate intellectual disability
04 severe intellectual disability
05 physical disability
06 hearing impairment
07 visual impairment
08 no disability (for comparison sample)

12) AGE AT LEAVING SCHOOL:
1 15 years or less
2 16 years
3 17 years
4 18 years
5 19 years or more

13) MANNER OF LEAVING SCHOOL:
1 **graduate with HSC** - left school with a Higher School Certificate (typically at age 18)
2 **graduate with SC** - left school with a School Certificate (typically at age 16)
3 **age out** - met legal age limit and formally left school without certification
4. **transition** : into further training or employment program
5 **transfer** - moved out of the district
6 **dropped out** - non-school attended who is under 18 years of age, does not have a school certificate or equivalent, and has not enrolled in another high school or equivalent educational program in the district.

FORM B

Directions: If the follow up survey is completed, complete remaining portion of form

14) INDICATE TRANSITION CURRICULUM AREAS ADDRESSED BY ITP OBJECTIVES:

(mark each box: Y = yes or N = no)

If data is not available, check ✓here 0 and code each item as zero.

	last year in school	2nd last year
1a) Continuing Education - academics	Y N 0	Y N 0
1b) Continuing Education - functional academics	Y N 0	Y N 0
2) Vocational Training	Y N 0	Y N 0
3) Community Living skills	Y N 0	Y N 0
4) Recreational and Leisure	Y N 0	Y N 0
5) Personal Management	Y N 0	Y N 0
6) Transport	Y N 0	Y N 0
7) Did interagency planning occur	Y N 0	Y N 0

15) **ESTIMATE** THE PERCENTAGE OF TIME SPENT ON EACH CURRICULUM AREA:

(Fill in the estimated percentage time in the spaces below)

If data is not available, check ✓here 0 and code each item as zero.

	last year in school	2nd last year
1a) Continuing Education - academics	__ %	__ %
1b) Continuing Education - functional academics	__ %	__ %
2) Vocational Training	__ %	__ %
3) Community Living skills	__ %	__ %
4) Recreational and Leisure	__ %	__ %
5) Personal Management	__ %	__ %
6) Transport	__ %	__ %
	= 100%	= 100%

16) PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY-BASED COURSEWORK/TRAINING:

	last year in school	2nd last year
a) Was former student involved in any community-based training	Y N 0	Y N 0
If yes, estimate the percentage of time spent in		
b) community-based vocational training	__ %	__ %
c) community-based living skills training	__ %	__ %
d) community-based travel training	__ %	__ %

17) INDICATE PARTICIPATION IN TRANSITION OPTIONS:

(mark each box: Y = yes or N = no)

If data is not available, check ✓here 0 and code each item as zero.

	last year in school	2nd last year
1) Joint Schools -TAFE Program(JSST)	Y N 0	Y N 0
2) Transition TAFE Courses - mainstream	Y N 0	Y N 0
modified mainstream	Y N 0	Y N 0
special	Y N 0	Y N 0
3) Job Coach	Y N 0	Y N 0
4) Enclave project	Y N 0	Y N 0
5) Other	Y N 0	Y N 0